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SAADIA GAON
HIS LIFE AND WORKS

BY

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אן אללה לא יכלי אמּתה מן תלמיד פי כל עצר יעלּמה ויבצּרה חתּי יפתיהא ויעלּמהא ותנצלח בה אחואלהא.

God does not leave His nation at any period without a scholar whom He inspires and enlightens, so that he in turn may so instruct and teach her, that thereby her condition shall be bettered (Saadia, *Sefer ha-Galui*).

To

SOLOMON SOLIS COHEN, M. D.

in token of

high esteem and sincere friendship

PREFACE

The present book was originally designed to furnish a biography of Saadia Gaon for the biographical series of the Jewish Publication Society of America, at whose request the work was undertaken. At that time, about six years ago, there were already in existence (as will be seen from pp. 90 f.) a considerable number of sketches of Saadia's life, written in various languages (Hebrew, Latin, French, German, English, Russian, and Dutch); but all of them were based upon the epoch-making essay of Rapoport, who, writing nearly a century ago (1828)—long before the Genizah gave up its treasures—had at his disposal only the scanty material scattered in the mediæval sources. For the biographical part in particular, only the Report of Nathan ha-Babli, the Epistle of Sherira Gaon, and some additional remarks by Abraham Ibn Daud were available. All that could be gathered from these sources about Saadia's life was that he was born in Egypt in 892, that he was appointed Gaon of Sura in 928, was deposed by the Exilarch David b. Zakkai and later reinstated (the deposition and reinstallation being related with some detail), and that he died in 942. Rapoport's biography, if it may be so called, consists therefore, chiefly of learned notes dealing with Saadia's writings, so far as these were accessible to him or known from quotations. Subsequent writers on Saadia followed Rapoport's example, adding nothing to the Gaon's biography, but entering more fully upon the description and characterization of his teachings.

Even after the new material of the Genizah had come to light, scholars concerned themselves in the main with the identification of the various fragments of Saadia's works

and the analysis of their contents. Incidentally attention was called also to new historical facts contained in some of the fragments, but no attempt was made to interrelate these facts and to combine the isolated data into a general picture of Saadia's life. Even the fragments relating to the Ben Meir controversy, so important for our knowledge concerning Saadia's movements in the East, have been considered more in their bearings upon the question of calendar, than in their relation to Saadia.

For the purpose of writing a biography this material was rather discouraging. It seemed that any attempt to draw a complete picture of Saadia's life on the basis of the few disconnected biographical data which had so far been utilized would prove fruitless, and that, instead, one should devote every effort to a full description of the Gaon's works and a systematic presentation of his doctrines. However, in order to get a more definite view of the subject it was necessary to submit the entire material of the old, as well as of the newly discovered, sources to a careful reexamination; to correlate the widely scattered details; and to try to interpret them in the light of already established facts. After repeated study of certain Genizah fragments, hitherto partly ignored and partly misinterpreted, new points of view gradually revealed themselves and fresh combinations appealed for consideration. Finally, after much sifting and analyzing, grouping and classifying of the collected details, the subject of our investigation stood out in relief. For here was Saadia, the *man,* with his human faults and virtues, his passions and convictions, his sufferings and rejoicings, victories and defeats. His entire life opened before us and we could follow his career almost without interruption. At times we were also granted a glimpse into his family affairs and his personal relations with his pupils.

At first the plan suggested itself, to use all this biographical material as external framework—as the convenient setting to what is after all the most important aspect of Saadia's life, namely, the scientific work which he bequeathed to

posterity. Such disposition of the material would have had the advantage of enabling us to follow step by step the intellectual growth and development of Saadia, as he advanced in years and maturity. Upon closer examination, however, this arrangement did not appear feasible, since our knowledge of the various writings of Saadia is not of a nature to warrant definite conclusions regarding their chronological order. Moreover, the combined treatment of Saadia's life and works under such a plan would have required a volume far exceeding the limits set for the biographical series of the Jewish Publication Society.

I had therefore decided to treat of Saadia's life independently of his works, and to leave the presentation of his literary activity for a separate volume. The Committee of the Jewish Publication Society, however, upon receiving the manuscript of the biography in the form in which it appears in the present volume, did not deem it advisable to issue a biography of Saadia without including between the same covers an adequate appreciation of his writings. Moreover, it was desired to preserve the footnotes, which are not exactly suited for a purely popular sketch. To solve the difficulty it was considered best to have the two parts published together as the first volume in the scientific series of the Morris Loeb Foundation.

This method had some drawbacks. By dividing the material into two distinct parts repetitions have in several instances become inevitable. Thus a work like the *'Agrōn,* in itself of comparatively little importance, but of special significance for our understanding of Saadia's earlier education, had to be discussed in more than one connection, each time from a different viewpoint. Similarly, some of the other works, as the Commentary * on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* the *Sefer ha-Galui,* and the *'Emūnōt we-Dēōt,* had to be taken up for discussion in the biography. For no matter

* Throughout this volume commentary is spelt with a capital when, as in the case before us, it forms part of the title of the Hebrew or Arabic work referred to.

under what aspect the life of a scholar and author is viewed, it cannot be entirely detached from his works. On the whole, however, an earnest effort has been made to avoid such repetitions as much as possible.

In an exhaustive work on Saadia it might further be expected that the general characterization of his achievements in the various branches of learning would be illustrated by numerous details and quotations from the respective works. This would seem especially desirable in the section dealing with Saadia's Bible exegesis, although the most important features of his work in this line have been repeatedly discussed by numerous modern authors. However, the field of Bible exegesis is so immense and Saadia's contributions to it so manifold, that their elaborate discussion would have required a special monograph. Here was a case of *divide et impera!* The brief summarizing exposition touches on the main features of Saadia's exegesis, and the numerous references to old and new sources, as given in the notes and the Bibliography, will do the rest.

Some inconsistencies will be noticed in the transliteration of Hebrew and Arabic names, titles of books, etc. It was not thought necessary in all instances to burden the print with the devices used in technical works in the endeavor to represent the exact sounds of the Oriental words. The exceptions, however, are comparatively few and mostly in common and frequently recurring words, as *Ibn, Tafsir, Ali, Galui, Zikron, Genizah,* and the like. Proper names occurring in the Bible, as Anan, Berechiah, Hophni, Nahshon, etc., are reproduced without diacritical points, as they are found in the English versions. Titles of books very frequently referred to are reproduced in full only when quoted for the first time. In subsequent passages they are given in some shortened form, as *Beiträge* (Dukes, Eppenstein, Jellinek), *Anfänge* (Bacher), or in abbreviations, as *AL* (Steinschneider), and the like. In some instances the name of the author was deemed sufficient, as Bornstein, Lazarus, etc., the

reader being expected to revert, in case of doubt, to the appended List of Abbreviated Titles (p. 429). In these matters, too, various inconsistencies came to my notice while revising the proofs, but it appeared too cumbersome to restore absolute uniformity in quotation.

A word must be added about the 'Bibliography.' The title is somewhat misleading and may needlessly frighten away the reader; but it has been adopted in the absence of a better short title equally convenient for repeated reference. This section of the work really represents an attempt at a critical history of the entire Saadia literature. I cherish the hope that any student who in the course of his reading has become interested in some of the branches of learning here presented, will welcome the help he may receive from it. The general reader, too, while not prepared to go into literary details, may find it gratifying to learn, by a glance through these pages, of the extraordinary attention the great Gaon has commanded throughout the ages, and the amazing amount of intellectual work that has been done by Jews and Christians in editing and translating, describing and elucidating his numerous writings.

In conclusion, I desire to express my profound gratitude to Miss Henrietta Szold, who, despite her manifold communal and literary activities, generously consented to go over the entire manuscript, to assist in putting it into final shape for publication. Apart from this general editorial work, which was no small task, she has made ever so many valuable suggestions in various directions, by which the work has greatly profited. I am under special obligation to my friend, Dr. Solomon Solis Cohen, who, in addition to many personal kindnesses, has taken the greatest interest in the present work. In a genuine spirit of friendliness he has given much of his precious time to a painstaking revision of the proofs, and, with his enviable mastery of English, removed, as by a touch of magic, many unevennesses in style and diction that had escaped my notice. He also was kind enough to furnish a translation of one of

Saadia's poems (see p. 337). My thanks are also due to my colleague and friend, Prof. Alexander Marx, of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, who greatly assisted my efforts with his rare bibliographic knowledge and placed at my disposal a large number of books, some very rare, from his rich private library.

PHILADELPHIA,
July, 1920.

HENRY MALTER.

INTRODUCTION

At the outset of his task the historian or biographer has to decide how he will envisage the broad problem presented. Shall he view the idea or the fact as the impelling force in human history? Are events born of ideas, or are ideas the necessary outcome of conditions? Do circumstances shape the individual, or does the individual compel circumstance? The first view may be designated as the genetic, or realistic, conception of history; the second, as the idealistic conception.

In a measure it is true that neither of the two factors, to the exclusion of the other, is the sole creative force in human history. The real point to be determined is as to which of them should be given the greater prominence in presenting and interpreting historical phenomena. The prevailing and, it would seem, correct view, is that the individual whose influence in shaping events may appear to be paramount at a certain period of the world's development, enters the arena as a genuine product of surrounding conditions, subject to all the laws of evolution by which other mortals are governed. Only gradually, the exceptional genius frees himself from the common shackles. He rises above his environment and takes the guidance of history into his own hands.

The first requirement, therefore, in presenting the life and work of such a genius, is to ascertain and depict the conditions that furnished the basis for the later developed individuality. It is the only way of accounting for what seems in the beginning to be entirely out of harmony with the general laws of causation.

Saadia Al-Fayyûmî is not to be classed among these highest geniuses of the world; but his greatness is so real, and so individual in its quality, that he cannot be fully explained as a necessary product of his time and surroundings. Nevertheless, it is needful to investigate the conditions of his earlier life, his education and his family relations, which

must have contributed importantly toward making him the founder of a new epoch in Jewish history and literature.

Unfortunately there is not enough material at hand to allow us to form a trustworthy opinion of the circumstances of our hero's earlier life. Nor are the historical records of the Jews in Egypt during the age of Saadia such that we can with certainty establish the influences at play in the shaping of that great individuality during the years of growth and development. The period in question is represented in Jewish annals by an almost blank page, and there is but little hope that the page will ever be written upon, unless the Genizah furnishes new material.

Not even legend,[1] the graceful substitute for stern history, has shown itself kind enough to Saadia to crown his personality with a wreath of poetry and beauty, such as it fashioned for not a few of the great men of the Jewish people before and after him. The man who was to inaugurate a new era in Jewish learning and literature springs out of the darkness to light the torch of reason in the gloom-encompassed camp of his brethren, and, his mission performed, darkness again engulfs him; for according to the records Saadia died "in melancholia." No poet is known to have sung the praises of the departed leader; no elegist has given expression to the grief and sorrow that must have overtaken Babylonian Israel at the untimely death of the greatest Gaon; no chronicler has left us even a prosaic account of the events immediately before and after this turning-point in the history of the ancient academy of Sura. The only fact that has been preserved is that a successor was installed, who failed to keep alive the orphaned institution; for with the death of Saadia, *the* Gaon, the Gaonate virtually ceased to be.[2]

[1] See below, chapter viii.

[2] It is true that about fifty years after the death of Saadia the Sura academy was reopened under the presidency of R. Samuel b. Hophni, but the institution never regained the rank it occupied under Saadia. Its very existence was made possible only through the close family relations that were established between Samuel b. Hophni and the Gaon Hai of Pumbedita (see below, note 281). Almost no Responsa

But though no definite information can be obtained with regard to the beginning and the end of Saadia's career, we are much more fortunate when we approach the main period of his life, a period that covered only about twenty-five years. During that time he put out one book after the other—dealing sharp blows to Karaism and the other enemies of traditional Judaism; translating, commenting, and elucidating the Bible and the Talmud; collecting and composing hymns and prayers; and writing the first philosophical Commentary on one of the most puzzling mystical works in Jewish literature. It was while engaged in this fruitful literary work that he was unexpectedly called to the highest position in the gift of tenth century Jewry. Soon thereafter we see him in a bitter struggle with the mighty Exilarch, the temporal head of the Babylonian Jews. Deposition and retirement into private life; the appearance of his *magnum opus*, the first philosophical presentation of Judaism since Philo; reconciliation with his enemies and re-installation in the office of Gaon,—all these events follow in rapid succession, and reveal to our eyes a man of astounding force and untiring energy; a life short when measured in years, but crowded with occurrences of tremendous import for the subsequent history of the Jewish people.

Such is, in brief, the story of Saadia Gaon, the details of which occupy the following chapters.

As noted, the first twenty years and more of Saadia's life, the years most essential in shaping character and individuality, are wrapped in obscurity. A complete biography is therefore impossible. However, the manuscript material brought to light within the last two decades contains various details which, when properly correlated, enable us to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of Saadia's career and to give an authentic account of certain important happenings hitherto unknown. For instance, on the basis of

exist of Samuel b. Hophni, who had otherwise written extensively on various subjects, which also indicates that under his Gaonate the Jews of the Diaspora did not turn to Sura for legal and religious advice, but to the more important academy of Pumbedita.

a new and, it would seem, plausible interpretation of some Genizah documents, we gain valuable information about Saadia's family relations, the causes that induced him to leave his native country, his travels, and his connection with the academy of Sura prior to his election as Gaon.

For full appreciation of Saadia's life and work we should know the condition of the Egyptian Jews during the ninth century; that is to say, the social and intellectual atmosphere in which the future Gaon grew up. Here again the few details at our command have not been derived from the commonly known Jewish and general sources; it has been necessary to cull them from recently unearthed, fragmentary documents. And valuable as they are, they are not direct information; they only afford a basis for certain inferences. Therefore, so far as concerns Saadia's surroundings during his formative period, we must confine ourselves to general remarks showing the points of contact between the culture and learning which we later find represented in Saadia, and the culture and learning of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries. An attempt at a more detailed description of the various channels through which Saadia received the many-sided education that made it possible for him to become the highest exponent of Jewish culture in the Orient would lose itself in vague hypotheses, adventurous rather than informative.

The facts about Saadia's early training and education, and to some extent also the cause of his emigration from Egypt, must thus remain a matter of speculation. Happily, we are better informed about his life and activity during the many years of his sojourn in the East, prior to his installation as Gaon (928). This information likewise comes to us through the documents that are continually cropping up from the famous Egyptian Genizah. Nearly all of these documents relate to what is called the Ben Meïr controversy,—a controversy in which Saadia played the most important part, and which therefore forms an essential portion of his biography. But it is only when we approach the last period of Saadia's life, beginning with his election to

the Gaonate, that the sources of information flow more abundantly, and our knowledge of the Gaon becomes more adequate. It is thus in keeping with the literary material at hand that the period covering Saadia's experiences in the Gaonate (the period which hitherto has constituted the whole of Saadia's biography) is treated here with more detail than the others.

Welcome, however, as a complete knowledge of the circumstances of Saadia's earlier life would be, both to the biographer and the student, the absence of such information is, in this case, less deplorable than in that of other eminent persons. Saadia's historical importance, as an official personage, as the religious head and representative of Babylonian Jewry and, in part, of the Jews in European countries, is undeniably great. But he appeals to our interest less through his powerful individuality as a public leader and uncompromising fighter for his cherished ideas and principles, than through his scholarly attainments—through the literary monuments left to posterity in nearly all branches of Jewish learning and literature. Our concern is therefore primarily with Saadia the scholar and investigator; the pioneer and pathfinder in the field of Jewish science; the linguist, grammarian, lexicographer and exegete; the Talmudist and the philosopher—in brief, the first scientific expounder of Biblical and traditional Judaism.

But is this not exactly what we should expect in a work on the life of a great man in the history of the Jewish people? History in its last analysis is mind materialized, thought transformed into action. In this sense the Jews of the Diaspora, taken as a whole, had no history; for they had little opportunity to act, they were everywhere acted upon. Their story is therefore not the account of a people's national and political activity, but that of human patience and endurance. From another point of view, too, the history of the Jews differs from that of any other nation. The history of a people revolves, for the most part, around its great men, who by their powerful individuality give direction to its destiny; the Jewish people,

having been deprived of all temporal power, had no such career to offer to those of its sons who, by virtue of extraordinary natural gifts, were qualified for leadership in the great movements of national life. The gifted personalities among the Jews spent themselves, with few exceptions, in the effort to acquire learning, sacred and secular. Essentially, Jewish history is a record of scholars and their literary productions, with the emphasis laid on the latter. It is a history of learning more than of living, of literature rather than of affairs.

It is thus in keeping with the general character of Jewish history that the biography of Saadia should primarily be a record of his literary achievements and of his spiritual influence. Much space must therefore be devoted to the presentation of his teachings in the various departments of Jewish learning of which he was the founder. In the field of religious philosophy and ethics Saadia's theories are to be detached from all that is incidental or, from our point of view, unessential, so that his general attitude and his basic system of religion may come out clearly. A brief characterization of the Gaon's standing in the estimation of later ages and of the importance attributed to his works by Jewish medieval authors, concludes the presentation.

In order to give the student of Saadia all the information he may have occasion to look for in the course of his inquiries, an exhaustive bibliography is necessary, not only of the writings of the Gaon himself, but also of the vast literature, reaching down to the present time, in which Saadia or his writings form the main subject of discussion. Aside from this practical purpose, the immensity of this Saadia literature in the various fields of research will make the reader realize at a glance, perhaps better than any description, the great significance of the man whose life and works were the origin and source of so much scholarly activity in generations past and present, and may stimulate him to enter upon the same field and continue the chain of Saadia students for the furtherance and promotion of Jewish learning and literature.

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PART I
LIFE OF SAADIA GAON

THE FIRST PERIOD OF SAADIA'S LIFE
(4652-4675=892-915)

CHAPTER I
ORIGIN AND FAMILY RELATIONS

Saadia[3] was born, in the year 892, in the village of

[3] The Hebrew form of this name is, like that of similar names occurring in the Bible (*e. g.*, שחריה, נְעָריה), סְעַדיה, or fuller סְעַדיהו, not סַעַדיהו, as Harkavy, זכרון לראשונים, etc. (hereafter quoted briefly: *Zikron*), V, 162, 164, and Bacher, *JE.*, X, 579, have it (but comp. מַעַדיה). This form of the name is proved by rhymes found in MSS., where the metre positively requires it; comp. D. S. Margoliouth, *Lines of Defense of the Biblical Revelation,* London, 1900, p. 41, n. 1; Renan, *Les écrivains Juifs Français* (reprint from *Histoire littéraire de la France,* Vol. XXXI), p. 155 (501); Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur,* p. 40. The correct transliteration is therefore *Se'adiah* which is, indeed, adopted by some recent scholars, as by Margoliouth, *l. c.;* comp. *JQR.,* XIII, 158, no. 6, and Cowley, *Catalogue of the Hebrew MSS. in the Bodleian Library,* II, *s. v.* I have preferred, however, to retain the old traditional form of transliteration, for after all the form employed for the sake of the metre may have been merely theoretical, and is no proof that the name was generally so pronounced. Grammatically סעריה stands for יִסְעַדְיה, being the (shortened) imperfect of the verb סעד, *to support,* and the noun יה =God, meaning "may God support" (the bearer of the name). Sometimes the word יה is supplanted by אל = God, giving the same meaning (comp. חננאל = חנניה). Thus the Gaon is called סעדאל by Moses Ibn Ezra, *JQR.,* X, 224; *JE., s. v. Saadia.* This form, however, was used as a proper name mainly among the Ḳaraites. In Arabic Saadia called himself *Sa'îd* which means *fortunate.* A rhetorical description of the Hebrew language, representing a part of Saadia's earliest known work, the *'Agrōn* (Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 52), gives the double acrostic סעיד בן יוסף, similarly in his hymn on the 613 precepts (ed. Joel Müller, in *Oeuvres complètes de Saadia,* IX, 67 ff.; comp. *ibidem,* p. xxi) and in his *'Aszhārōt* (קובץ מעשי ידי גאונים קדמונים. Berlin, 1857, pp. 52 ff.), as well as in his Polemic against Ḥiwi, edited by Davidson, New York, 1915, pp. 34 f.; comp. Bacher, *RÉJ.,* XXXV, 291. Occa-

Dilâẓ,[4] in the district of Fayyûm, Upper Egypt. He seems to

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sionally Saadia is called also המצרי, the *Egyptian* (Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, 16), perhaps also בן הצפני with allusion to צפנת פענח (Gen., 41, 45), the name of his father being likewise Joseph; see Harkavy, *MWJ.*, V, 26.

According to Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XI, 327, the Hebrew name by which Saadia called himself in a later work, the *Sefer ha-Gālui* (Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, p. 163, last line; 165, ll. 6, 10), was the original, of which the Arabic *Sa'îd* was the translation. Bacher (*Rivista Israelitica*, II, 46; comp. *JE.*, X, 579), on the other hand, thinks that the Hebrew name is an artificial equivalent of the original Arabic *Sa'îd*, which view seems to me the more probable. This is certainly the case with Saadia's Hebrew by-name הפיתומי, which was substituted for the original Al-Fayyûmi, *i. e.*, of Fayyûm (comp. Geiger *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift*, V, 314, note), perhaps because of the phonetic resemblance of the two words, or more probably because the Gaon himself (as also Muhammedan writers; comp. Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XI, 588, no. 580) in his Arabic translation of the Bible renders the Biblical פִּתֹם (Exod. 1, 11) by פיום, though modern research has proved that the Biblical *Pitom* is situated in Lower Egypt and therefore cannot be identical with the Fayyûm, which is in Upper Egypt. It is a well known fact that Saadia liked to render Hebrew words and proper names by Arabic equivalents of similar sound, even when he knew that they had nothing in common but the sound; see the references given by Taubeles, *Saadia Gaon*, Halle 1888, p. 27, n. 7, especially W. Engelkemper, *De Saadiae Gaonis Vita* etc., Münster, 1897, p. 7, n. 3. Frankl (*Monatsschrift*, 1871, p. 355) takes the untenable view that פיתומי is a derivation from פתה, meaning "deceiver," and was originally given to Saadia by his adversaries with the purpose of vilifying him. Were this true it would be highly improbable that all the Hebrew authors who quote the Gaon reverentially with the adjective Pitomi should have been unaware of its disparaging meaning. When the Ḳaraite Sahl b. Maẓliaḥ (960) in an Epistle published by Pinsker (לקוטי קדמוניות, II, 36) refers to Saadia as "the *Pitomi* who deceived (*patah*) the people," he simply plays on the by-name Pitomi by which Saadia was already known.

For completeness' sake it may be added that the Arabic historian Al-Mas'ûdi, quoted below, note 20, calls Saadia "Sa'id Ibn Ja'ḳûb," which is, perhaps to be changed into Ibn *Abi* Ja'ḳûb, in which form it is the by-name (*kunya*) of Joseph; see for this matter Steinschneider, *JQR.*, IX, 622, *Arab, Literatur*, p. 46.

[4] The information that Saadia was born in Dilâẓ is found first in a controversial letter of Saadia's opponent known only under the

have been of humble parentage, his father, Joseph, probably deriving his livelihood from some trade. If we are to put credence in certain contemporary sources, Saadia's father was successively or simultaneously a butcher, a barber, a leech,[5] and a muezzin.[6] For some reason not stated in these sources he was exiled from Egypt and died in Jaffa.[7] The same documents assert that Saadia was not of Hebrew origin; that his parents were descendants of Egyptians of the village of Dilâẓ who had been converted to Judaism. It would in no wise be derogatory to Saadia if any of these assertions, or all of them, proved to be true. The employment of a man, if pursued honestly, detracts nothing from his personal worth, nor would the fact that his ancestors happened to be proselytes lessen in any degree our recogni-

name Ben Meir. The letter was written in the winter of 921-22, and was published first by Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 213-220; see particularly *ib.*, p. 216, line 1. Ben Meir repeats the same in a second letter written in the summer of the same year and published first by Schechter, *JQR.*, XIV, 56 ff., and in *Saadyana*, Cambridge, 1903, p. 20; see *ib.*, line 6. Both letters were republished with numerous corrections and notes by H. J. Bornstein in the *Sefer ha-Jōbēl* in honor of N. Sokolow, later in a separate volume under the title מחלקת רב סעדיה גאון ובן מאיר Warsaw, 1904. In the following notes I shall refer to the pages of this important work in its separate edition only. For the matter under discussion see *ib.*, pp. 50, 90. Another opponent of Saadia, Aaron Sarjâda, later Gaon of Pumbedita, also refers to Saadia disparagingly as a "Dilâẓian gentile"; see Harkavy, *l. c.*, p. 234, l. 15. About the place Dilâẓ see the references given by Harkavy, *l. c.*, p. 234, n. 9; comp. *ib.*, pp. 145, n. 2, 165, n. 11; Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Fatimiden Chalifen*, Göttingen, 1881, p. 313. For the year of Saadia's birth see also Buber, שערי ציון, Jaroslau, 1885, p. 32, n. 420, and his Introduction to תנחומא, p. מ״ד. His contention, followed by Grünhut, הגן, 1899, p. 180, that Saadia was born in 862 is without basis. [For the date 882, found recently in a Genizah fragment, see *Postscript.*]

[5] See Bornstein, p. 90, n. 5; Harkavy, p. 230.

[6] Schechter, *Saadyana*, p. 20, n. 3; comp. Eppenstein, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Literatur im geonäischen Zeitalter* (reprint from *MGWJ.*, 1908-13), Berlin, 1913, pp. 127 f.; below, note 188.

[7] Schechter, *ib.*, n. 4. There is no reason to doubt the veracity of the sources in this point. Saadia's father may have died in Jaffa on his way East to join his son, see below, note 119.

tion of his character and greatness.[8] But coming, as these reports do, from men known to have been the bitterest enemies of Saadia, with the obvious intention of discrediting and disqualifying the object of hatred, they must be put on a level with the invectives and malicious charges against the Gaon that are found in the same documents.[9] We may leave such hostile testimony out of our calculation. On the other hand, from the respectful tone in which a very prominent and well-informed authority[10] refers to Saadia's father, we may conclude that the latter, whatever his occupation may have been, was a pious and learned Jew.

Moreover, I am inclined to think that the panegyric of a Gaon and his family discovered some years ago in the Genizah[11] has reference to none other than the Gaon Saadia

[8] The Talmud points with pride to several eminent teachers of the Mishnah as descendants of non-Jews, and even R. 'Akiba, the "father of rabbinical Judaism," was, according to an old tradition (Nissim, פמתח, 18*b*), the descendant of proselytes. R. 'Akiba's famous pupil, R. Meir, is said to have been the descendant of Nero (*b.* Gittin, 56*a*); comp. Brüll, *Jahrbücher,* II, 154 ff.; Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 233, n. 3; see also Harkavy, *Saadjah-Miscellen, Israelitische Monatsschrift* (*Beilage zur Jüdischen Presse*), Berlin, 1890, no. 12.

[9] Saadia is here accused of profaning the name of God, transgressing in public the laws of the Sabbath, embezzling the funds collected for the poor, and leading a debauched life; see Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 233. That there was not a shadow of truth in any of these charges is evident from the fact that the same men who uttered them, particularly the Exilarch David b. Zakkai, later reappointed and recognized Saadia as Gaon, as the religious and spiritual head of all Israel; comp. Harkavy, *l. c.,* p. 223.

[10] R. Sherira, the Gaon of the sister-academy in Pumbedita (961-998); see Sherira's *Epistle,* ed. Neubauer, I, 40, top; Bornstein, p. 90, n. 5, end.

[11] Schechter, *Saadyana,* no. xxxv. The MS. was already out of my hands, when another portion of this panegyric was published by Mr. Jacob Mann (*JQR., N. S.,* vol. IX (1918-1919), pp. 153-160). Mr. Mann dismisses Schechter's tentative identification of the hero of the poem with Saadia as out of the question, because in the acrostic of the poem the author styles himself רבנו (our teacher) which, had Saadia been the subject of the eulogy, he would certainly not have done. Space forbids to enter here upon a detailed discussion of the new portion of the panegyric. But it may be pointed out that

and his house. There we learn that he had three sons and two married daughters. There were also a brother and nephews, the sons of his sisters, who apparently were considered members of his family.[12] In two passages we are informed that Saadia's wife, "though advanced in years, was still fresh and vigorous and bearing fruit," and the writer expresses his wish that the child to which she was about to give birth should be a son.[13] Now it is known from historical sources that Rabbi Dosa, the only son of Saadia who acquired prominence as a scholar, was born during

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no poet would properly refer to *himself* in the acrostic as "*Our* Teacher"! The title רבנו refers not to the author but, like the immediately following titles, to the subject of the poem. Without basis is also Mr. Mann's contention that this part of the panegyric is the continuation of the one published in Schechter's *Saadyana,* because there only three sons of the hero are alluded to (p. 68, l. 22), while here "already" four are mentioned, a fourth son having in the meantime been born. One may just as well reverse the order and say that when the part published in *Saadyana* was written one of the four sons had died. With such argumentation we get nowhere.

[12] Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 64.

[13] I derive these details from the text in Schechter's *Saadyana,* p. 66, ll. 25-6; p. 67, ll. 18-19. My interpretation of the text will do away with the difficulty raised by Schechter, *l. c.,* p. 65, who opposes the identification of the Gaon, to whom the panegyric is dedicated, with Saadia on the ground that no reference is made therein to R. Dosa, the only son of Saadia known to history. At that time Dosa was not yet born. If, on the other hand, we assume that the Gaon referred to is Samuel b. Hophni, we are confronted not only with the difficulty, also pointed out by Schechter, *l. c.,* that Samuel's son-in-law, the Gaon Hai, is not mentioned, but also that his learned son, R. Israel, who is supposed to have assisted him in the Gaonate, is likewise disregarded; see for this matter Poznański, *REJ.,* LXII, 120-123, and *JQR.,* 1912-3, p. 403, bottom; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 13, note. The author of the panegyric is most likely the same R. Abraham to whom Saadia in his letter to his pupils in Egypt (*Saadyana,* p. 25, l. 2, overlooked by Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 8) refers as "our friend," and perhaps identical with אברהם סגלת הישיבה mentioned in *Saadyana,* no. lvi, p. 148, l. 17; see Schechter, *Saadyana,* pp. vii, 147. It may also be noted that the eulogist refers to Yannai and Eleazar [Ḳalir] as the Gaon's models in the field of poetry (p. 73, l. 24) which is done also by Saadia in his אגרון

Saadia's first occupancy of the Gaonate (928-932),[14] the period in which the panegyric under discussion must have been written. If we bear in mind that we are dealing with the Orient, where the women age at a very much faster rate than with us, we shall concede that the author of the eulogy might well describe Saadia's wife, who was then about forty, in the terms quoted. That Saadia was the father of several children besides the well-known Dosa is borne out by two fragmentary letters which were likewise discovered in the Genizah.[15] These were undoubtedly written by Saadia, and in both he mentions his "beloved children." The author of the eulogy, a certain Abraham Kohen, who appears to have acted as the Gaon's secretary, speaks with great veneration of his master's progenitors,[16] perhaps including the father.[17] The language is so vague that it cannot be decided with certainty, whether in speaking of Saadia's "forefathers" Abraham had in mind particular

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(Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 51) and in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah*, ed. Lambert, p. 23; see below, p. 44.

Recently A. Marmorstein (*JQR., N. S.*, vol. VI (1915-1916), pp. 158 ff.) has put forth the view that "there are five different Abraham Hakohen." However, as he has only four, he borows one from Schechter's *Saadyana*, p. 64, n. 12. The passage in no way bears out his contention.

[14] See Poznański's article on Dosa, רב דוסא ברב סעדיה גאון (reprint from הגרן, vol. VI) Berdyczew, 1906, p. 9, who, approaching the subject from another side, also arrives at the conclusion that Dosa must have been born about 935. This, to my mind, is a little too late, as in that year Saadia was already an exile, while our eulogy refers to him as Gaon. That this eulogy, if it refers to Saadia, was written after his reinstatement in the office (937) is quite improbable, as in this case we should expect some explicit reference to the important events that took place during the years immediately preceding it.

[15] Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. vii; Bornstein, p. 67; *JQR.*, IX, 37, reprinted by Epstein, *RÉJ.*, XLII, 201, Bornstein, p. 69. The importance of these letters will be discussed later. Here I wish to state only that the authorship of Saadia is established beyond doubt in spite of the objections of Israel Lévi (*RÉJ.*, XLI, 231); see Epstein, *l. c.*, 202; Bornstein, 71, and recently also S. Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 91.

[16] Schechter, *Saadyana*, pp. 66, l. 17; 68, l. 14 (?); 73, l. 28.

[17] Schechter, *Saadyana*, p. 65, n. 5.

persons known to him, or used the word figuratively in a general sense.[17a] In connection with this it should be noted that Saadia himself claimed to be of the tribe of Judah. He traced his pedigree directly to Shelah, the third son of Judah,[18] while the historian Abraham Ibn Daûd (12th century) asserts that Saadia was a descendant of Ḥanina b. Dosa, a teacher of the Mishnah in the first century.[19]

[17a] In the part published by J. Mann, however, the allusion to the father is quite explicit; see Mann, *l. c.*, p. 159, n. 143.

[18] Harkavy, *Zikrōn*, V, 164, n. 10; 229, n. 5; comp. Bornstein, pp. 72 f; below, note 230. We need not attach much importance to this statement; it is repeated too often in the history of Jewish celebrities to be true. Ben Meir (see below, note 150), Sherira (see below, note 228), Rashi, Maimonides, Isaac Abarbanel, and many others made similar assertions, or were put in such relationship by generous Hebrew chroniclers; see Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו (Wilna, 1904), IV, 146; *idem*, בית תלמוד, I, 161, particularly Zunz in his notes on the *Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela* II, 6-9; see also below, note 659.

[19] See Poznański, רב דוסא ברב סעדיה גאון, p. 7, n. 12.

Chapter II

SAADIA'S EARLY EDUCATION

The uncertainty that characterizes the first period of Saadia's life is felt most strongly when we approach the question of his early education. It is not merely a matter of the details needed for the completion of Saadia's biography as an individual. We are concerned with the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Jewish people, the immediate causes and surrounding circumstances of which, the Jewish historian is particularly desirous of knowing. We should like to reach back to the very roots of the thoroughgoing change in the intellectual development and literary activity of the Jews that coincides with the appearance of Saadia on the scene. We should like to know in how far Saadia's individual genius is responsible for the new era he inaugurated, or to what extent we ought to feel indebted to his teacher or teachers, Jewish or Muhammedan, and to the intellectual atmosphere which he breathed during his formative period. Unfortunately, there is nothing in the available sources to clear up these points, and the student must comfort himself with the reflection that all beginnings are obscure.

The only positive reference to a teacher of Saadia is found in the work of a contemporary Muhammedan writer, the historian Al-Mas'ûdi[20] (died 957), who names as such a certain Abû Kathîr Yaḥya al-Kâtib of Tiberias. Mas'ûdi reports that he had a religious disputation with Abû Kathîr in Palestine, and that the latter died in 320 of the Heǵira (=932, C. E.). No further particulars are known about this Abû Kathîr, except that the famous Muhammedan

[20] In his *Kitâb at-Tanbîh,* edited by J. M. De Goeje in *Bibl. Geogr. Arabicorum,* vol. VIII, Leyden, 1894, p. 113, French translation by Carra de Vaux, *Le Livre de l'Avertissement,* Paris, 1896, p. 160.

theologian Ibn Ḥazm (994-1064) quotes him together with Saadia and David Al-Muḳammiṣ (see p. 67) as one of the Jewish Mutakallimûn (theologians).[21] Modern Jewish investigators are inclined to identify him with Judah Abû 'Ali, or b. 'Alân, ha-Nazir of Tiberias,[22] an eminent grammarian, whom the Ḳaraites count as their own.[23]

[21] See below, note 33.

[22] The first to suggest this identification was L. Dukes in his קונטרס המסורת, Tübingen, 1846, p. 2. The suggestion was taken up by Steinschneider in his essay *Jüdische Literatur* in Ersch and Gruber's *Encyklopädie*, II, vol. 27, p. 414, n. 27 (1850; English edition, "Jewish Literature," London, 1857, p. 324, n. 27, Hebrew translation by H. Malter, Warsaw, 1897, p. 194, n. 4), also by Geiger in the Hebrew periodical *Ozar Nechmad*, II (1857), 158 (reprinted in Geiger's *Nachgelassene Schriften*, V, 32, and recently also by Poznański, קבוצת מאמרים, Warsaw, 1910, p. 233), and Pinsker, *Likḳūtē* (1860), I, 5, 105. The Hebrew sources from which our knowledge of this grammarian is derived give his name as Judah b. 'Alân ha-Ṭabbarāni, *i. e.*, of Tiberias (so the Karaite Judah Hadassi, 12th century, in his *'Eshkōl*, Alphabet 257, letter מ: . . . יהודה בן עלן הטברני משכילי נ"ע: comp. *ibidem*, Alphabet 173, letter ט, where he mentions טברני המדקדק as the author of a work מאור עינים), and 'Alî b. Judah ha-Nazir (so David Ḳimḥi in מכלול, ed. Lyck, 1862, p. 81; comp. Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, 133; Bacher, *Die Anfänge der Hebr. Grammatik*, p. 44, n. 4). In the text I have given the name in accordance with Steinschneider, *Arab. Liter. der Juden*, § 23; comp. *ib.*, § 67, where the references to a considerable literature on the matter are given; see also *JQR.*, XIII, 315. Here it should only be mentioned that according to Pinsker, *l. c.*, 5 (accepted by Bacher in Winter and Wünsche's *Die jüdische Litteratur*, II, 141) this Judah is probably referred to by Abraham Ibn Ezra (מאזנים, beginning), who speaks of a "scholar of Jerusalem, whose name is unknown and who wrote eight valuable works on grammar in the Arabic language." He is mentioned also by the Ḳaraite Lewi b. Jephet, 11th century (Pinsker, *l. c.*, II, 64; comp. *ib.*, p. 139, where a Hebrew elegy of Judah is quoted) and by Judah Ibn Bal'am, an eminent grammarian of the 11th century (Pinsker, *l. c.*, I, 5); comp. also Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 115, and in לוח אחיאסף, Warsaw, 1894, pp. 279 f.; *Ha-Goren*, IV, 75 ff.

[23] See Harkavy, *l. c.* and *Zikron*, V, 115, who disputes this Ḳaraitic claim and, against Pinsker, concludes that he was a Rabbanite; comp. also Steinschneider, *AL.*, § 23.

The identity of this reported teacher of Saadia is of far-reaching importance, not only for his pupil's biography, but also for the general history of medieval Jewish literature. Ever since the question has been mooted as to when and by whom scientific methods of investigation were first introduced into the various fields of Jewish literature, particularly that of Hebrew philology and exegesis, scholars have been divided on that point. Jost,[24] Munk,[25] Geiger,[26] and particularly Pinsker[27] were of the opinion that the Ḳaraites inaugurated the period of scientific activity, more especially as concerns grammatical and lexicographical works. From them the spirit of investigation spread to the Rabbanites. Pinsker, indeed, goes so far as to assert that "soon after the close of the Talmud there appeared a number of Ḳaraite scholars who wrote on astronomy, philosophy, rhetoric, poetry, grammar, and lexicography," preparing thereby the new era of Jewish science, which is commonly considered Saadia's creation. It was Anan, the founder of Ḳaraism (750), who originated the watchword, "Search well in the Bible!" and thus gave his followers the impetus to break with the Midrashic, allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures dominant among the Jews of his time, and to replace it by an exegesis based on grammatical and philological studies. On the other hand, Rapoport,[28] Steinschneider,[29] and more recently Bacher[30] and Harkavy,[31]

[24] *Geschichte der Israeliten*, II, 328.

[25] *Notice sur Abou'l-Walid Merwan Ibn-Djanah*, Paris, 1851, p. 4.

[26] *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie*, V, 274; comp. also Poznański in *Leben und Lebenswerk* of Abraham Geiger, Berlin, 1910, p. 383.

[27] *Likḳute*, I, 4 ff.; comp. his introduction to that work, p. iv, and Schorr's criticism of the same in *He-Ḥaluẓ*, VI, 56 ff. For other references see Steinschneider, *Jewish Literature*, 326, n. 33; 327, n. 49; *idem*, *Bibliographisches Handbuch*, Leipzig, 1859, p. xii, n. 5.

[28] In his biography of Saadia in the Hebrew periodical *Bikkūrē ha-'Ittim* IX (1828), 20 ff.

[29] *JQR.*, XIII, 314; XVII, 356; *MWJ.*, XX, 236; comp. also *ib.*, XIX, 260.

[30] *Die Anfänge der hebräischen Grammatik*, Leipzig, 1895, pp. 2, 38 f.

[31] *Zikron*, V, 36 f.; comp. *MWJ.*, XX, 149, 236.

basing their views on the testimony of Abraham Ibn Ezra, who gives an historical enumeration of the first Hebrew grammarians, emphatically deny the claim of the Ḳaraites, and assign priority to Saadia. Harkavy, the consistent opponent of Pinsker, even goes to the extreme of denying that the Ḳaraites had any part at all in influencing the development of Hebrew philology; a view espoused, however, by no other scholar.

If, now, the above-mentioned Abû Kathîr is identical with Judah b. 'Alân, supposedly referred to by Abraham Ibn Ezra as the author of eight works on grammar, and if he was a Ḳaraite, as is claimed by Judah Hadassi and, following him, by Pinsker, we should have here not only the desired information on the nature and the sources of Saadia's early education, but also sufficient ground for the assumption that the Ḳaraites had in fact taken the lead in bringing about the new era of learning and literature, of which Saadia was merely the first Rabbanite exponent. But such is not the case. There is no good reason to doubt the identification of Abû Kathîr with Judah ben 'Alân, but it is altogether improbable that the latter was a Ḳaraite. Many of the Ḳaraite opponents of Saadia were his contemporaries, and could not have been ignorant of a circumstance so favorable to them. Had Saadia's teacher been a Ḳaraite, and a scholar of such eminence that even a Muhammedan writer took notice of him, they would not have failed to advert to a fact that might seem to show both their own superiority and the ingratitude of their adversary.[32] On the other hand, there is excellent reason to believe that the teacher of Saadia was a Rabbanite. Al-Mas'ûdi makes an teacher of Saadia was a Rabbanite. Al-Mas'ûdi makes an explicit statement to this effect with reference to Abû Kathîr,[33]

[32] This becomes the more certain when we remember that some Ḳaraites accused Saadia of such ingratitude toward his Ḳaraitic opponent Salmon b. Jeroham, whom they falsely declared as Saadia's teacher in order to base their accusation thereon; comp. Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו, Wilna, 1904, IV, 124, n. 1.

[33] That Abu Kathir was a Rabbanite may be concluded also from the fact that Ibn Ḥazm (see above, p. 33) mentions him as a Jewish

while in respect to Judah b. 'Alân the epithet *Ṭabbarānī ha-Medaḳdeḳ* ("the Tiberian grammarian") renders it all but certain that he belonged to the school of the Tiberian Masorites, who were all adherents of traditional Judaism.

The information given by Al-Mas'ûdi enables us to establish a relationship of pupil and master between Saadia and one of the scholars of his time, whoever he may have been. There is no evidence, however, that the relation existed during the first period of Saadia's life, while he was still in Egypt. It may have fallen into the period of his Palestinian sojourn. Saadia emigrated to Palestine in 915, at the age of twenty-three.[33a] He was still young enough to sit at the feet of a master; and Abû Kathîr (who, according to Al-Masûdi, died in 932) may have been sufficiently his senior in years to take the part of his senior in learning. From Arabic sources we know that Al-Mas'ûdi visited Palestine in 926,[34] probably the year of the religious disputation,[35] mentioned before, carried on by him with Abû Kathîr at Tiberias. Here and on that occasion it may have been that he made the acquaintance of Abû Kathîr the master, and Saadia the disciple. To be sure, in the year 926 Saadia had settled permanently in Babylonia as a member of the

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Mutakallim together with Saadia and Al-Muḳammiṣ (see Friedländer, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. I (1910-1911), p. 187, n. 6). It is not probable that this Muhammedan polemist, who was familiar with Jewish matters (comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, XVI, 765-771) would have thus mixed together Ḳaraites and Rabbanites on the ground that they had theories on the Kalâm in common. For Al-Muḳammiṣ see below, p. 67.

[33a] But see *Postscript.*

[34] See Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arab. Litcratur,* I, 144; Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XII, 298.

[35] One of the disputed questions was whether the divine law was intended for all times or was given with the view of being abrogated at some future time when it will be replaced by a new law. This problem greatly agitated the minds of Jewish and Muhammedan theologians of the time, and Saadia himself has devoted much space to its discussion in the third chapter of his *'Amânât;* comp. Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Litcratur,* p. 103; Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia,* Göttingen, 1882, pp. 148 ff.; Goldziher, *RÉJ.*, XLVII (1903), 41 f.

academy of Sura. This does not preclude, however, his having been in Tiberias the same year; he was in the habit of traveling.

Assuming all this to have been the case, nothing has been gained so far as concerns the first period of Saadia's life—the Egyptian period under consideration. We must again leave the safe ground of positive history and try to satisfy ourselves with conjectural indications. We shall have to set out, as it were, on a voyage of exploration to Egypt and the neighboring countries, or to countries known to have had some connection with ninth century Egypt, in order to discover the learned or otherwise prominent men living there shortly before and during the time of Saadia. Such men testify to an intellectual life and to literary activity in circles which, judging from particulars to be enumerated later, must have been accessible to Saadia, and must have determined his course.

In the first place, it must be pointed out that the language of the Jews of Egypt and the other Eastern countries under Muhammedan rule was, without doubt, chiefly Arabic. In all probability the language of the Ḳorân had become the vernacular of most of the Jews and the Samaritans soon after the Heǵrah.[36] This being the case, it is obvious that Saadia could make use of the literature of the Arabs as well as the works of Judaeo-Arabic authors. That the Arabs, even previous to the time of Saadia, had developed a vast literature, covering all fields of human knowledge, is too well known to require detailed proof. Nor can there be any doubt that the literary productions of the Arabs living in the main seats of Arabic culture (Bagdad, Baṣra, etc.) were current also in Egypt, which until 972, when it was

[36] See A. E. Cowley, *JQR.*, VII, 565; *ib.*, XII, 495. The Arabic speaking Jews always attached a certain degree of sacredness to the Arabic language, which they considered as "corrupted Hebrew"; see for this matter Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XIII, 303-310; *idem AL.*, pp. xxiv, xxxiv; Bacher, *JE.*, V, 13. For quotations of the Ḳorân in the works of Saadia see the references by Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XII, 499.

conquered by the Fâṭimide Caliph Al-Mu'izz, was a dependency of the 'Abbaside Caliphate that had its seat in Bagdad. This political connection was re-enforced by constant migrations between the two countries, owing to the pilgrimages to Mecca that were frequently undertaken by the Muhammedans in large troops (caravans). Numerous scholars in various fields of literature and science are known to have lived in Egypt during the ninth and tenth centuries.[37] Still closer relations existed between Egypt and the neighboring countries in northwestern Africa (Cyrenaica, Tripoli, Algeria, and Morocco of today), especially

[37] For the many scholars who lived either their whole life or for some period in Egypt before and during the time of Saadia, see Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur,* I, 91, 131, 142, no. 4 (the great historian Al-Ṭabari), 148, 162*c-d,* 173 f., nos. 7-8, 176, 178 (the 'Imâm Al-Shâfi'i, founder of a school of Fuḳahâ', *i. e.,* expounders of Muhammedan law, whose influence can be seen also in Saadia's Halakic work; comp. Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. xxiii), 180, nos. 2-3, 198, no. 2 (a Ṣûfi), 221 (the astronomer Al-Farġâni; comp. Malter, *Die Abhandlung des Abû Ḥâmid Al-Ġazzâli,* Frankfurt a. M. 1896, pp. viii f.), 226 (the famous historian Al-Ya'ḳûbi, died 891), 232, no. 5 (a teacher of Isaac Israëli, but see Steinschneider, *JQR.,* XIII (1901), 97); comp. also Steinschneider, *Orientalistische Litteratur-Zeitung,* 1904, *col.* 431, no. 87A (probably the same one who is mentioned in Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Fatimiden-Chalifen,* p. 38, as living in the Maġreb), *ib.,* 1905, *col.* 213, no. 200 (where the date 1526-7 is to be corrected to 933, as in Brockelmann, *l. c.,* I, 173; see Steinschneider, *ib.,* 1905, *col.* 489, l. 1), *col.* 264, no. 234. For Judah b. Joseph of Raḳḳa in Egypt (or Mesopotamia? see Steinschneider, *Hebräische Übersetzungen,* 378, n. 69; p. 774; *idem, JQR.,* XI, 328, top, and below, note 135), a physician and philosopher (pupil of the famous astronomer Thabit b. Kurrah, who died in 891), with whom Mas'ûdi reports he had a disputation at Tiberias in 314 of the Heġra (=926, c. e.), see Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur,* § 24; comp. *JQR.,* XIII, 298, and above, notes 21, 34. All the scholars mentioned in the passages referred to were famous in the various fields of literature and science in which they worked. It goes without saying that these scholars were not the only ones in Egypt and the Maġreb; that there were many more in the various parts of both countries, who were not active as authors, or whose works were lost during the following centuries. It is therefore but reasonable to assume that there existed a compara-

after the rise of the Fâṭimide dynasty (909), which had established its seat in Ḳairwân,[38] a city subsequently famous in the history of the Jews.[39]

The question is to what extent did Saadia, prompted either by his own desire for learning, or other motives, familiarize himself with the works of Muhammedan authors before his emigration from Egypt to Palestine. We shall have occasion to show the influence of Arabic literature on Saadia in works of his, written beyond a doubt at a later period of his life. Here, only the following passage can be cited to prove that the Arabic influence had begun to show its traces at the time when he was preparing one of his earliest known literary productions, the Hebrew lexicon and rhyming dictionary *'Agrōn*. The very name of this book, written in his twentieth year,[40] is in imitation of titles used by Muhammedan authors for similar works.[41] It is not necessary, however, to draw conclusions from such technical details. Saadia expresses himself unreservedly about his indebtedness to Arabic authors, who served him as models in the composition of his work. "It is reported," he says, "that one of the worthies among the Ishmaelites, realizing to his sorrow that the people do not use the Arabic language correctly, wrote a short treatise for them, from which they might learn proper usages. Simi-

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tively high standard of culture and civilization among the Egyptian Muhammedans of the eighth and ninth centuries, though their schools of learning, as Brockelmann (I, 131) avers, were entirely dependent upon those in the 'Irâḳ, the main country of the Caliphs and the seat of Arabic culture, which at that time had reached the highest mark in the history of the people.

[38] Comp. Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Fatimiden-Chalifen*, Göttingen, 1881, pp. 29 ff.

[39] See Poznański's אנשי קירואן, Warsaw, 1909, where a full account is given of the Jewish scholars who are known to have lived in Ḳairwân from the beginning of the ninth to the middle of the eleventh century, when, owing to adverse political events, the Jewish community was disorganized and dispersed.

[40] See Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 46, n. 6; 56, n. 40; comp. also *ib.*, p. 28, notes 8 and 9; Bacher, *REJ.*, XXIV, 308.

[41] Harkavy, *ib.*, 29 f.

larly, I have noticed that many of the Israelites do not observe even the common rules for the correct use of our [Hebrew] language, much less the more difficult rules, so that when they speak in prose most of it is faulty, and when they write poetry only a few of the ancient rules are observed, and the majority of them are neglected. . . . This has induced me to compose a work in two parts containing most of the [Hebrew] words."[42] A few lines before this passage he mentions having met numerous scholars who spoke of the loss of many scientific works, two of which he quotes by title. The rules of Hebrew grammar adverted to in the fragments of this work possessed by us—only a little more than the Introduction has been preserved—likewise reveal the influence of the school of Arabic grammarians.[43]

Great as the influence of Arabic culture on Saadia may have been, his main teachers, even in the period under consideration, are to be looked for among his own brethren, and the chief sources that inspired him in his youth with love for knowledge and the ambition to follow a learned career must be sought in the field of early Jewish literature. To do justice to him we must take into account whatever is known, either on the testimony of available sources or by way of assumption, of his personal contact with learned contemporaries or his acquaintance with the older writings. The evidence thus secured will furnish us the background against which Saadia's figure stands out prominently.

In the first place it must be taken into consideration that Jewish life and some Jewish literary activity persisted in Egypt long after the Alexandrian period. In the absence of adequate historical records[44] its nature cannot be accu-

[42] Harkavy, *ib.*, 45, lines 3 ff.; comp. Bacher, *Die Anfänge der hebr. Grammatik*, p. 60.

[43] See Bacher, *ib.*, p. 60, n. 3.

[44] Several interesting Greek documents, partly from the Fayyûm, the birthplace of Saadia, and dating from the sixth and seventh centuries are discussed by Théodore Reinach, *Nouveaux documents relatifs aux juifs d'Égypte*, *RÉJ.*, XXXVII, 218-225; see in particular p. 219, no. 3, and pp. 224 f., *Post-scriptum.*

rately defined. On the other hand, so far as the mediæval period is concerned, we can trace Jewish learning in various parts of Egypt as far back as two centuries before Saadia. This is sufficiently borne out by the various collections of Hebrew papyri found in Egypt, particularly in the district of Fayyûm, where Saadia was born.[45] A rather conservative estimate places the origin of the Fayyûm papyri in the first half of the eighth century. Most of the fragments contain remnants of liturgical hymns, one of them bearing, according to Zunz[46] and Steinschneider, close resemblance in style to a hymn by Eleazar Kalir. The existence of synagogue poets in the Fayyûm at so early a period, and no doubt also much later, down to the time of Saadia, may have inspired him with the idea of writing the *'Agrōn,* which was intended to teach the art of versification.[47]

The spread of Talmudic learning in Egypt long before Saadia is further attested by a document brought to light from the Genizah, in which a certain Abû 'Alî Ḥasan of Bagdad appears as "the Head of the Congregation" of Fostât (Old Cairo) in the year 750.[48] In another document one Nahum b. Abraham binds himself not to dispose of his share in a house, of which two others mentioned by name were joint owners with him, in such a way as to transfer his portion of the property to a certain Joseph Kohen. The agreement is drawn wholly on the basis of the Talmudic law governing the peculiar situation, and the phraseology used is also Talmudic. Mention is made of two synagogues situated in Fostât, for whose benefit the same Nahum was to pay a fine of twenty denarii in case of breach

[45] Steinschneider, *MWJ.,* VI, 250-254; *idem, Bibliotheca Mathematica,* Stockholm, 1895, p. 23; comp. Harkavy *Zikron,* V, 31; Th. Reinach, *l. c.; JE.,* V, 60, *s. v. Egypt.* For the origin of the Jewish community in the Fayyûm see in particular Blau, *Papyri und Talmud.* Leipzig, 1913, p. 10 and references.

[46] Quoted by Steinschneider, *MWJ.,* VI, 251.

[47] Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 37.

[48] See *JQR.,* XVII, 426 ff.; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, p. 2, n. 1; p. 55, n. 1; p. 61, n. 1; p. 122, note, end; E. J. Worman, *JQR.,* XVIII, 1 ff.; comp. also Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו, Wilna, 1904, IV, 124.

of contract. Many other manuscript fragments discovered in the Genizah, some of which belong to the ninth and tenth centuries, contain references to the same two synagogues, and make it otherwise certain that large Jewish settlements existed in Egypt, particularly in Fostât, as early as the eighth century, and probably even earlier, in the post-Alexandrian period.[49] We may therefore take it for granted that a Saadia, impelled by a keen desire for learning, early familiarized himself with whatever knowledge existed among the Jews of his own country.

That the Jews of Egypt before and during the time of Saadia had been in possession of the literature and learning emanating from the two academies of the Babylonian Geonim, the main seats of Jewish culture in those times, is likewise to be considered a matter of course. Indeed, there was hardly any other country except Palestine, that was in such frequent communication with Babylonia in the period under consideration. The fact that, over and above a large number of unclassifiable remnants of a diversified literature, so many fragments of the Babylonian and the Palestinian Talmud,[50] as well as a very large collection of Geonic Responsa[51] were among the treasures of the Genizah in Cairo, may be taken as proof that the study of the Talmud in general and of the Geonic literature in particular

[49] See Worman, *JQR.*, XVIII, 12, top, 21, l. 5; 27, bottom; 38; Bornstein, מחלקת רס"ג, p. 37, n. 2; 40, n. 2.

[50] שרידי הירושלמי, edited by Louis Ginzberg, New York, 1909.

[51] Forming the second volume of Ginzberg's *Geonica,* New York, 1909. This fact remains significant even if many of the manuscripts were written at a period later than that of Saadia, for they may be copies of much older originals, which were current in Egypt long before. Most of the Responsa published by Ginzberg, so far as the authorship can be ascertained, come from the Geonim Moses b. Jacob, Sar Shalom, Naṭronai b. Hilai, Amram, Ẓemaḥ b. Palṭoi, Nahshon (all of whom lived between 832-874), and others of the pre-Saadianic period; comp. Ginzberg, *ib.*, pp. 19, 28, 88, 107, 143, 156, 176, 179, 186, 191, 210, 216, 237, nos. 10-13, 255, no. 2, 298, no. 26, 301 ff.; see also *Appendix* (*Sheëltot* and the *Halakot Gedolot*), *ib.*, 349 ff.

had had full sway among the Jews of Egypt at an early period. It goes without saying that the young and wide-awake Saadia followed the spirit of the time, and was a busy student of the entire range of Geonic writings. Possibly his acquaintance with this literature and his ardent desire to see with his own eyes the great spiritual leaders of the Jews of the Diaspora, were among the causes that subsequently induced him to emigrate to the land of the Geonim.

Another and a no less important factor that must be considered in the search for the sources of Saadia's early education is the relation between the Jews of Egypt and those of Palestine, especially the city of Tiberias. As early as the beginning of the eighth century Tiberias was the seat of a distinguished school of Masorites and punctuators of the Bible.[52] Palestine was also the soil from which sprang the Midrashim, the oldest collections of homiletical interpretations of Scripture. These originated between the sixth and tenth centuries and are as genuinely Jewish in spirit as the Talmud, next to which they rank in bulk in Jewish literature. Besides several works of Halakic content, belonging to the same period,[53] the mysterious *Sefer Yeẓirah* ("Book of Creation") is in all probability also the product of Palestine.

That Saadia, while yet in Egypt, at the door of Palestine, was thoroughly acquainted with the products of Palestinian authors can in many instances be substantiated by quotations in his own works. Thus, in his earliest surviving book (the *'Agron*), he mentions by name five "ancient Hebrew poets," whose compositions, he avers,

[52] The ספר תגין, published by J. J. L. Bargès, Paris, 1866, is probably also a product of the Tiberian Masorites. Sachs, in his introduction to the work, considers it still older. At any rate it was known also to Saadia, as he mentions it in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (ed. Lambert, 94, top); comp. below, note 452.

[53] *E. g.* the *Sheëltot* (Halakic discussions) of R. Aḥa of Shabḥa (eighth century), the tractate *Soferim* (see the references in Bardowicz, *Die Abfassungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen*, Berlin, 1913, p. 37, n. 2), and some of the מסכתות קטנות; see Bornstein, מחלקת, p. 111.

served him in some points as an example.[54] Three of these poets are the famous Payyeṭanim Jose b. Jose, Yannai, and Eleazar Ḳalir, who, as is now ascertained, lived in Palestine during the seventh, and at the beginning of the eighth, century. The identity of the two others, Joshua and Phinehas, is still doubtful, but in all probability both were Palestinians belonging to the school of Masorites[55] whose works Saadia often used. As to the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* we know that Saadia wrote a philosophic commentary on it.[56] It is true that this commentary belongs to a later period,[57] and it might be assumed that he became acquainted with the *Sefer Yeẓirah* during his sojourn in Palestine. Such an assumption, however, does not recommend itself. The book must have been known in the East and also in Egypt some time prior to Saadia's birth. It was probably the reputation of the work that induced him to provide it with a commentary.[58] At least two other authors, both contemporaries of Saadia, but living in different countries, also wrote commentaries on it, Isaac Israeli in Ḳairwân and Shabbetai Donnolo in

[54] Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 51.

[55] Comp. Bacher, *Anfänge,* 42, 47, 50, n. 2; for Phinehas see *ib.* 31, n. 1; Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 112; comp. the list of Masorites, *HB.,* XIV, 105; Brüll, *Jahrbücher,* II, 174; for Joshua see Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 110.

[56] *Commentaire sur Sefer Yesira . . . . publié et traduit par Mayer Lambert,* Paris, 1901.

[57] The year 242 *Contractuum* = 931 common era, is given by Saadia himself (ed. Lambert, p. 52; French translation, p. 76) as that in which the work was written, hence not in Egypt, as is generally assumed. This matter will be discussed in detail later on, when the work comes up for special consideration.

[58] Saadia himself at the end of his Introduction to the Commentary (Arabic text, p. 13, lines 5 f., French translation, p. 29) gives as a reason for his writing the commentary "that the book is *not* of frequent currency and that only few people are able to understand it" (אד לים הו כתאב כתיר אלוגדאן ולא אלכתיר מן אלנאס יקף עליה). This, however, seems to mean only that the book, because of its unintelligibility, was not popular among the people in general, and does not exclude its being well known and much studied by scholars, who alone concern us here.

Italy. Aside from these general considerations there is strong evidence that Saadia knew the *Sefer Yeẓirah* at the time he wrote the *'Agrōn* and was indeed influenced thereby as to certain grammatical doctrines. This is almost a certainty as regards Saadia's main grammatical work, the *Kitâb al-Luġah* ("Book on the Language"), which was probably written in Egypt soon after the *'Agrōn*. This book is no longer in existence,[59] but various particulars found in the works of later authors made it possible for Bacher[60] to give a full description of its original plan and arrangement, as well as of its contents. In his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah*[61] Saadia himself, in the course of his discussion of its grammatical features, not only quotes lengthy passages from his *Kitâb,* but also refers to the latter for a more elaborate treatment of certain points. If a more convincing fact is needed to prove that Saadia had the *Sefer Yeẓirah* before him when he wrote the grammar, it is furnished by the established circumstance that Saadia's grammatical theories coincide in many particulars[62] with those of his contemporary, the famous Masorite Moses b. Aaron b. Asher, concerning whom the *Sefer Yeẓirah's* influence has been proved beyond a doubt.[63] It should further be noted in this connection that Saadia was the one who first suggested[64] that the *Sefer Yeẓirah* originated in Palestine.

Finally, among the general promoters of intellectual life at about the time of Saadia, mention must be made of the Karaites. It is now the consensus of opinion among scholars that there is no foundation for the claim made by Karaite

[59] Some fragments were published by Harkavy in *Ha-Goren,* VI (1897), pp. 30-38.

[60] *Anfänge*, pp. 38-60.

[61] Ed. Lambert, p. 75, l. 3 from bottom, French part, p. 97; comp. Bacher, *Anfänge,* p. 40, n. 3; 45, n. 6, especially the *Bibliography,* below, p. 307, no. 2.

[62] Bacher, *Anfänge,* p. 44, n. 4; 47, n. 2; 48, no. 8.

[63] This was first shown by D. Rosin, *MGWJ.,* XXX (1881), 521; comp. Bacher, *ib.,* p. 21.

[64] At the end of his Introduction to the Commentary, p. 13, top, French, p. 29; comp. Bacher, *ib.,* p. 23, top.

authors and by some recent investigators, that the Ḳaraites were the first to enter the field of scientific reseach, particularly in Hebrew philology, which marks the beginning of a new epoch.[65] Nevertheless, it would be futile to deny to the Ḳaraites before and during the time of Saadia the merit of having been in some degree instrumental in bringing about this new era in Jewish literature. They may not have produced works in general comparable with Saadia's, but their very existence as a schismatic sect, their negative attitude toward traditional Judaism, and their active propaganda, in speech and in writing, for the new cause, could not have failed to incite a counter-activity among the Rabbanites. Thus, they helped to prepare the intellectual ground from which Saadia sprang, as the main defender of the besieged fortress of Rabbinism. There is no need to search for historical records to corroborate the course of events as outlined. Saadia's own works, to whatever period of his life they belong, are the clearest proof. That he early felt the necessity of combatting the Ḳaraite heresies is obvious from the fact that in 915,[65a] when but in his twenty-third year, he wrote a polemical work against Anan, the founder of Ḳaraism. This was followed by other polemical writings against the teachings of eminent members of the sect.[66] There is no room for doubt that, while yet in Egypt, he knew besides the writings of Anan also those of Benjamin Nehâwendi, whom he mentions twice in a work belonging to a later period,[67] and Daniel Al-Ḳumisi,[68] though both had probably lived in Babylonia or Palestine. The Ḳaraites, who were very active in their efforts to make converts, early selected Egypt as a favorable place for mission-

[65] See above, notes 24-32.

[65a] See *Postscript*].

[66] For a detailed account of Saadia's writings against the Ḳaraites see below, pp. 263 ff.

[67] *'Amânât,* ed. Landauer, Leyden, 1880, p. 201, ll. 2, 11; *'Emunot,* ed. Cracow, p. 134.

[68] See Schechter, *Saadyana,* pp. 41 (comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* Frankf. a/M., 1904, p. 4, *ad locum*), 144, no. lv; comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, XIII, 681 ff.

ary work;[69] and in later years that country, especially Cairo, became their main seat.[70]

Thus far, the channels through which Saadia may have acquired his learning in his earlier years have been traced in a general way. We can now point out in particular a few scholars of eminence with whom, it is positively known, he came in contact in his formative period, and who undoubtedly influenced his career. In the first place, mention must be made of that famous physician and philosopher Isaac b. Sulaiman Israëli, whom the Christian scholastics style *eximius monarcha medicinae*.[71] Israëli died about 953, and, as he is reported to have lived over a hundred years, he was much older than Saadia. Like Saadia he was a native of Egypt, where he was a practising oculist for some years. Subsequently[72] he was called as physician to the court of Ziyâdat Allah, the third and last of the Aġlabite rulers of the Berber lands, who had established their seat in Ḳairwân. Whether Saadia, who was a young man when Israëli assumed his position in Ḳairwân, ever met him personally, is hard to say. It is known that the two men had a lively correspon-

[69] Comp. Pinsker, *Likḳūṭē*, II, 14, bottom; Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XVIII, 100, bottom; Geiger, *Ozar Nechmad*, IV, 34.

[70] Among the learned Ḳaraites, who probably lived in Egypt and there disputed with Saadia, is Abû-'l-Surri Ben Zuṭa, frequently quoted by Abraham Ibn Ezra; comp. Poznański, *Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon*, London, 1908, p. 4; Gottheil, in Harkavy's *Festschrift*, German part, pp. 115 ff.

[71] For all details on Israëli see Steinschneider, *Arab. Liter.*, § 28, and recently Guttmann, *Die philosophischen Lehren des Isaak b. Salomon Israeli*, Münster, i/W., 1911.

[72] The date is not certain. Graetz gives the year 904, which is considered arbitrary by Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XIII, 96. The author of the article "Egypt" in the *JE.*, V, 61*b*, declares that Israëli "was recalled to Egypt from Ḳairwân, and entered the service of 'Ubaid Allah," and that he was still there, in royal service, at the death of Al-Manṣûr (952). He is evidently unaware of the fact that neither 'Ubaid Allah, the first, nor Al-Manṣûr, the third caliph of the Fâṭimide dynasty had ever ruled over Egypt, which was conquered only by Al-Mu'izz, the fourth Fâṭimide caliph, in 972. Israëli was thus never "recalled" to Egypt.

dence on scientific subjects for some time previous to Saadia's departure from Egypt. This is explicitly stated by Dûnâsh Ibn Tamîm of Ḳairwân, a pupil of Israëli, in a commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah*,[73] written by Israëli and recast by Dûnâsh, whose version alone has been preserved, in two Hebrew translations from the Arabic. Dûnâsh informs the reader at the beginning of his commentary that at the time when this correspondence took place he was twenty years old, and Israëli used to show him Saadia's letters, to test his ability to understand and explain their scientific content. He adds, not without self-complacency, that he was able to detect the mistakes made by the writer, which pleased the teacher greatly, because of Dûnâsh's youth at the time. Assuming that the correspondence referred to was going on for some time before Saadia's emigration to Palestine in 915, we come to the conclusion that Dûnâsh was born at about the same time as Saadia, in 892, not in 908, as has been hitherto asserted.[74]

Dûnâsh does not show much admiration for Saadia. He speaks of him rather disrespectfully,[75] though at the time when this commentary was written, in 955-956, Saadia was dead, and his fame was established, of which facts there is no hint in the book. This is strange, but it is not the only difficulty in connection with this commentary, which in other respects too, which cannot be discussed here, is one of the most complicated literary problems.[76] However, the attitude of Dûnâsh toward Saadia is of little importance.

[73] Poorly edited, with irrelevant notes, by M. Grossberg, London, 1902. On the question of the authorship of this commentary see the references given below, note 76.

[74] Comp. Poznański, אנשי קירואן, p. 18, top. [See *Postscript*.]

[75] I do not know on what ground Steinschneider bases his assertion to the contrary (*Hebr. Übersetzungen*, p. 399, and *Bibliotheca Mathematica*, 1895, p. 25, bottom); comp. for instance the passages pp. 24, 46, 73. The main passage, p. 17, even contains clear allusions to Saadia's conceit.

[76] These problems were treated exhaustively by Steinschneider, *Hebr. Übers.*, pp. 394-402; *Arab. Liter. der Juden*, pp. 44, 73.

We are here concerned merely to bring out the points that as early as the middle of the ninth century, when Israëli was born, Egypt was a fertile soil to produce men of the highest type of learning and that Saadia did not rise as a solitary palm in a desert, but grew up in an intellectual atmosphere created by scholars of various occupations and interests, though only a few of them are recorded in the available sources of our history.[77]

Besides Israëli and Dûnâsh numerous scholars are known to have lived in Ḳairwân with whom Saadia had relations, or whose literary productions he knew. There are references in one of his own works to the "men of Ḳairwân" and the "men of Africa," who "in our time" wrote a Hebrew work provided with accents and arranged in verses in the manner of the Biblical writings. This work, he says, served him as a model for his own.[78] It is true that these references to the scholars of Ḳairwân occur in a work written by Saadia long after his emigration from Egypt; but considering the facts that the Jewish community of Ḳairwân was very prominent during the ninth century, and that even the Babylonian Geonim had carried on correspondence with

[77] Comp. Guttmann, *Die philosophischen Lehren des Isaak ben Salomon Israëli,* Münster i/W., 1911, p. 2. Of the many Muhammedan scholars in Egypt before Saadia mention has been made above, note 37. Here the Jewish scholar Mashallah, should be pointed out, "one of the earliest and most eminent astrologers" (770-820), who, as Steinschneider assumes (*Arab. Liter.*, § 18; *Bibliotheca Mathematica,* 1894, p. 37), lived in Egypt. He is credited with thirty works on astronomy and astrology. Among the learned contemporaries of Saadia mentioned by Mas'ûdi (see above, notes 20, 37) is one Sa'id b. 'Alî Ibn אשלמיא of Raḳḳa in Egypt, perhaps a Jew; comp. Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XI, 328. In Ḳairwân there lived at that time a Jewish scholar by the name Ziyâd b. Ḥalfûn, who participated in the war waged by 'Ubaid Allah; see Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Fatimiden Chalifen,* 34, 59; Steinschneider, *Arab. Liter.*, p. 44, n. 4. For Judah b. Joseph al-Raḳḳi see above, note 37.

[78] Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 151, l. 19; 163, 8; 180, 10, especially pp. 209 f.; comp. Schechter, *JQR.*, XVI, 427; Poznański, *Anshe Ḳairwân,* p. 2.

some of its learned members as early as the eighth century,[79] it would be absurd to assume that Isaac Israëli was the only scholar of Ḳairwân whom Saadia knew while in Fayyûm, and that of all other "men of Africa" he learned only after he himself had left that continent and was travelling in Asia.[80] No doubt the other early works which he mentions in connection with those of the Ḳairwân scholars were also known to him before he left Egypt.

Especial mention should be accorded to a passage in his Introduction to the *'Agrōn,* in which he informs us that to substantiate his views he cites parallels from the works of the ancient poets, as Jose b. Jose, Yannai, Eleazar Ḳalir, and others, whenever this is possible, and then adds, "As to the productions of more recent poets, I shall quote their authors by name only when I wish to praise them, but not when I criticize their words."[81] The passage shows that Saadia had a literature of considerable extent at his disposal when he wrote his first work. As the main part of the *'Agrōn* is lost, it is of course impossible to identify the authors or their works. Only the name of one poet, Nahrawâni, is preserved in a passage quoted from the *'Agrōn* by a certain Mubashshir,[82] a contemporary of Saadia, who criti-

[79] Poznański, *Anshe Ḳairwân,* pp. 5 f.; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I. 32, 51, n. 2.

[80] Comp. Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 35, n. 2. The words "in our time" (בּי עצרנא הדא) cited above do not necessarily mean the last, or the present year; they may as well denote a period of twenty-five years.

[81] Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 51.

[82] Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 55, n. 1, tries to prove against Steinschneider that the name is not the translation of the Arabic *Mubashshir,* but the Hebrew *Mebasser* (מבשר) which is an epithet of Elijah, meaning "Proclaimer of Good Tidings." It is strange, however, that of all the bearers of this name enumerated by Ginzberg, there is not one who lived outside of the Arabic-speaking countries. If the name was originally Hebrew, we might as well expect it to be used by Jews living elsewhere; for further details on this name see Steinschneider, *JQR.,* XII, 196, and Margoliouth, *JQR.,* XII, 708; XIII, 156, no. 2; comp. also below, p. 324, under *Lamentations.*

cized the views laid down in that work.[83] The identity of this Nahrawâni is not fully assured.[84]

But high as the standard, whether of general civilization or Jewish learning, would appear to have been in the Orient, both from what has been said above and from what is generally known, it does not suffice to explain Saadia's greatness and many-sidedness. The great men whom we have enumerated so far, were men of prominence in the circumscribed fields of literature and science to which they devoted themselves. There were talmudists, philosophers, grammarians, and the like, previous to and contemporaneously with Saadia. But with the exception of Israëli none of them attained to distinction outside of his particular line of work. Saadia is the first Jewish scholar whose universal mind embraced all the branches of Jewish learning known in his time. He acquired a mastery in each department that throws into the shade the efforts of all his predecessors and contemporaries, and that has won for him the honorable title

[83] Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 68-73; comp. Bacher, *Anfänge,* p. 41.

[84] See Harkavy's discussion of the matter, *ib.,* pp. 115 f.; comp. also *ib.* p. 70, n. 4, and *Ha-Goren,* II 86; Epstein, *REJ.,* XLII (1901), 208. It may be added in this connection that the appearance in Northern Africa of Eldad ha-Dani, shortly before the close of the ninth century, which stirred up the Ḳairwân community and elicited a responsum from the Gaon of Sura, produced some literature, which must have become known to Saadia in Egypt (see for Eldad the references in Steinschneider's *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden,* § 13). I also believe that Saadia knew and made use of the Book *Josipon,* which will be proved in detail in my forthcoming edition of Saadia's *'Amânât* in the Hebrew translation of Ibn Tibbon (*Emunōt* we-Deōt, end of chapter 8). This was originally the opinion of Zunz, but later, following Rapoport (in his biography of Ḳalir, note 7; see the collection יריעות שלמה, Warsaw, 1904, p. 30), he declared his former opinion as "wholly groundless"; see Zunz, *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge* (1892), p. 159, n. *d.* For the present I wish to point out that *Josipon* is referred to also in the Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* by Dûnâsh (or Israëli), ed. Grossberg, p. 37; comp. also Dukes, *Beiträge,* p. 99.

accorded to him by an admirer, "the chief spokesman in all matters of learning" (ראש המדברים בכל מקום).[85]

[85] This title of honor was given first to R. Judah b. Ilai, one of the most celebrated teachers of the Mishnah in the second century; comp. *b. Berākōt*, 63*b*. There the phrase designates R. Judah as the first speaker in the assembly of scholars, as the one who was to open the learned discussions. Abraham Ibn Ezra was the first to apply this Talmudic title to Saadia, but in a diverted sense, meaning to say, that "Saadia first introduced the cultivation of all branches of Jewish knowledge, which was continued ever since without noticeable interruption" (Steinschneider, *Bibliotheca Mathematica*, 1894, p. 102); comp. Steinschneider, *Arab. Literatur*, p. 46, and Ewald-Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, 10.

THE SECOND PERIOD

CHAPTER III

SAADIA'S EMIGRATION TO THE EAST (4675=915)[85a]

Dividing the life of a human being into periods marked by events carries with it the danger of arbitrariness. Man's life in reality is a continuous, though fluctuating, process of becoming and unfolding, which does not halt at any mental land-mark. Circumstances may step in one's way and prevent one from proceeding on a course as planned, but the life-energy of an individual is not paralyzed thereby. After many detours it asserts itself in its own way. This is especially true of men of genius and great mental energy of whatever kind.

In designating Saadia's emigration to the East as the beginning of the second period in his career, we do not mean to convey the idea that this external event was the cause or the effect of any radical change in Saadia's pursuits and aspirations, thus becoming essentially responsible for what we know of him from history. The chief aspect of Saadia's life as generally presented is that of a great scholar, and perhaps, to use a hackneyed modern phrase, of an "active worker" in the cause of traditional Judaism. He had begun his labors in both fields before he left Egypt. His first literary work (the *'Agrōn*) was issued in 913, and two years later, before departing from his native country,[85a] he wrote another to defend Rabbinism against the innovations of Anan. His work in the following period, though greater in scope and extent, was but a continuation of one or the other form of literary activity. Not even his appointment to the Gaonate of Sura, important as this incident

[85a See *Postscript*].

is from the viewpoint of his public career, was in any way instrumental in the making of Saadia, for by that time (928) he had passed the formative years. We have to think of Saadia simply as one who, from his early boyhood to the end of his days, was animated by two desires: to acquire and impart knowledge and to oppose the enemies of Talmudic Judaism. All the positions and relations into which he was brought during the period we are now to consider must be viewed merely as episodes in his life-history. They help us greatly to appreciate the man's character and disposition, but they do not represent a particular and significant phase in his intellectual development. It was not by virtue of these that he became the founder of a new epoch in Jewish history.

It is nevertheless useful, if only as a matter of form, to treat Saadia's arrival in the Holy Land as a turning-point in his career. It is at this juncture that Saadia, however slowly and dimly, emerges, as it were, from Egyptian darkness into the light of documentary history.

It has been generally assumed, hitherto, that Saadia lived in Egypt until the year 928, when, owing to his exceptional reputation as a scholar and to the lack of great men in Babylonia, he was called by the temporal head of Babylonian Jewry from his native country to occupy the seat of the Gaons of Sura.[86] It was also pointed out, with some pride and satisfaction, that the Babylonian authorities, for the first time disregarding a tacit rule or custom to appoint as Gaon only a native of Babylonia, had resorted to the importation of a foreign scholar.[87] The opening of the Genizah has changed the face of this chapter of Jewish history. Two little scraps of paper preserved among the numberless shreds of literature in the Cairene mausoleum for dilapidated books make it certain that Saadia had departed from Egypt not later than 915, and had sojourned for many years in various

[86] The source for this view is a passage in the סדר הקבלה of Abraham Ibn Daûd, who, as it seems, misunderstood his source, namely the Epistle of Sherira Gaon; see below, notes 125, 126.

[87] Graetz, *History of the Jews,* English translation, III, 193, and as late as 1902, S. Kraus in *Jewish Encycl.,* II, 413.

parts of Palestine, Syria, and Babylonia prior to his installation in the office of Gaon.

These fragments are parts of two letters written by him somewhere in Babylonia, during the winter of the year 922 (January-March), and addressed to three of his former pupils who had remained in Egypt.[88] The master assures his disciples that his "love and affection for [them][89] has never waned, for educating the young leaves indelible traces in the heart [of the teacher],[90] the more when it has been undertaken for the sake of the fear of God and the glorification of His name. As I have been desolate ever since I left my wife[91] and children, so I have grieved over my separation from you. May it be the will of the Almighty that I see you[92] again in health and happiness. It is now *six and a half years* that no word from you has reached me. I even wrote to you condoling with you over the death of the venerable old man,[93] blessed be his memory, but I saw no answer. Only recently I was told by our friend R. David, son of R. Abraham, that you had written to him and requested him to secure the opinions of the heads of the academies regarding the fixation of the months Marḥeshwān

[88] The first letter, part of which is given here in English translation, was published first by Schechter in the *JQR.*, XIV (1901), 59, also *Saadyana,* pp. 24 ff., while the second was published earlier by Neubauer, *JQR.*, IX, 37 and, with a French translation, also by Epstein, *RÉJ.*, XLII, 201 ff. Both were then re-edited with additional notes by Bornstein, מחלקת, pp. 67-71; see below, *Appendix,* p. 412, nos. 4-5.

[89] The passage might also be translated, "your love and affection for me," but the corresponding passage at the beginning of the second letter supports the rendering as given in the text.

[90] The Hebrew here is rather obscure and none of the editors has commented upon it. The wording suggests Is. 28, 16.

[91] Literally, "my tent," but the word אהל, like בית (house), is used in a figurative sense to designate the mistress of the house; comp. Moëd Ḳaṭan, *7b; Bereshit rabbah,* section 41, § 4; Shabbat, 118*b* (the saying of R. Jose).

[92] The parallel passage in the second letter reads here "to make me see *them* (*i. e.* his family) and you" (פניהם ופניכם).

[93] Probably the grandfather of the pupils.

and Kislew of the year 1233 [Seleucidan era = November and December, 921, common era]. I presume that you wrote to him, and not to me, only because, in accordance with previous reports, you thought *that I was still in Palestine.* He himself [R. David] suggested that you seem to have thought so. He further requested me to write to you and to inform you [regarding the state of affairs]." [94]

The rest of this letter, as well as nearly the whole of the second letter, written two months later, deals with the question of the calendar, which does not concern us for the present. But it should be mentioned that in both letters we are informed incidentally that the writer had spent the preceding summer, or part of it (921), in Aleppo (Syria), and from the second letter we learn that he *returned* thence to Bagdad.

The important facts derived from these documents are the following. Saadia had been married in Egypt, and left a wife and children behind when he emigrated to the East. He was recognized as a scholar and teacher in his native country, and from his new home kept up a correspondence with his former pupils. He left Egypt in June or July, 915, and lived for some time in Palestine,[95] then in Bagdad and in Aleppo.[96] From Aleppo he returned to Bagdad, in all likelihood before the Jewish New Year's festival (autumn, 921). Incidentally we learn also of a certain R. David, who, as the epithet "our friend" indicates, was known to Saadia's pupils in Egypt, and like Saadia may have been a former resident of that country, but now lived in Babylonia. The father of this R. David is possibly identi-

[94] The Hebrew text suggests here the supplement "that it is not so," meaning to say that he is no longer in Palestine. A comparison with the corresponding passage in the second letter, however, proves that he has reference to the matter discussed by him in the following lines, the dispute with Ben Meir, which is the main burden of the letter. The words supplied by me should therefore be taken in the same sense.

[95] See below, pp. 64 f. [and especially *Postscript*].

[96] Comp. Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon,* p. 14.

cal with the R. Abraham who acted as the secretary of Saadia several years later, and who is the author of the panegyric which was discussed above.[97]

What induced Saadia to leave his birth-place, to separate from his kith and kin, and to wander about in foreign lands, cannot be made out from these sources. The suggestion has been made that his thirst for knowledge, which, he thought, was more readily obtainable in the East, and particularly his desire to come in closer contact with the main representatives of Jewish learning in the two Babylonian academies, drove him from Africa to Asia.[98] Others think that he started out originally with the pious intention of settling on the holy soil of Palestine,[99] but that untoward circumstances forced him to proceed further. In either case his family was to follow at some later period. Another suggestion may be derived from the history of his time. He may have left Egypt because of the political unrest and the perils of war that had troubled the country since the new dynasty of caliphs, the Fâṭimide, had pitched its tent in Ḳairwân (909), the closest neighbor of Egypt.[100]

But these assumptions can serve at best only as explanations for Saadia's departure from Egypt and later from

[97] Pp. 28 ff. This possible identity has been overlooked, so far as I can make out, by all who have dealt with the matter, also by Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana*, p. 8, *s. v.* Abraham ha-Kohen; comp. above, note 13.

[98] Eppenstein, *MGWJ.*, 1910, p. 314 (*Beiträge*, p. 90); comp. above, p. 43.

[99] Bacher, *JE.*, X, 579.

[100] In 914 a large army sent by the first Fâṭimide caliph, 'Ubaidallah Al-Mahdi, invaded northern Egypt under the leadership of his son, Abu-'l-Ḳâsim, who later succeeded to the throne, conquering the city of Alexandria and other parts of the country. After much fighting, which must have lasted over a year, the Egyptians succeeded in driving out the intruders, who are said to have left 7000 dead on the field. In consequence an epidemic broke out in Egypt and the adjacent countries, killing thousands of people, among them numerous well-known scholars. The defeated caliph did not, however, give up the fight but prepared for another invasion, though the plan was not carried out until three years later, when Abu-'l-Ḳâsim actually took

Palestine to Babylonia. None of them explains why he did not return home when his attempts to establish himself elsewhere had failed, especially as he yearned to rejoin his family, and, as we shall see later, prayed for this consummation. It would be surprising in the extreme if, for no other reasons than those cited, a man like Saadia, who was to become the Gaon of Sura, the religious head of all Israel, should, for nearly seven years and perhaps longer, have accepted separation from his wife and children, and lived the life of an itinerant scholar. Travelling Jewish scholars are not, indeed, rare phenomena in later mediæval history. None of the more prominent instances, however, that might be thought of in this connection, is in any way similar to that of Saadia.

It would therefore appear that Saadia did not leave Egypt voluntarily, either because he was seeking knowledge, or because he wanted to live in the Holy Land. He was either banished by the authorities for some real or fancied offense, or he apprehended grave danger to his life, and decided to go into exile before it was too late. As we shall have occasion to observe later, Saadia was of a somewhat pugnacious disposition. He was a man of iron will and unbending determination, coupled with a keen sense of justice and uprightness. A man of this type may have a few friends and admirers, but certainly many more enemies and adversaries. We further know that Saadia began his battle with the Ḳaraites by writing a book against Anan, the founder of the sect. It was written while Saadia was still in Egypt, and it was the first signal of a struggle that was to last all his life, and that made him the most hated and most feared

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possession of the Fayyûm. Under such conditions it would appear very likely that Saadia and many others, of whom we do not know (comp. above, p. 56, with reference to David b. Abraham), thought it best to leave the troubled country and seek refuge among their brethren in the Holy Land; see for the content of this note Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Fatim. Chalifen,* pp. 50-55, and Aug. Müller, *Der Islam,* pp. 610 ff. [but see *Postscript*].

champion of Rabbinism against Karaism.[101] Any one acquainted with social and political conditions in Muhammedan countries, and particularly with the administration of justice by the Islamitic rulers of those days, knows how little it took to bring death upon the most prominent men of the country.[102] Slander and calumny were strong weapons in the hands of revengeful and unscrupulous enemies such as the Karaites often proved to be, and where these failed, bribery might prevail. It does not require a great stretch of the imagination to assume that Saadia was the victim of such persecution in youth, as he was in later life, because he stood up unflinchingly for his religious convictions and for the principles of right and justice. His emigration from Egypt as well as his prolonged travels in the East were thus against his will. Like Moses of old, he may have waited for the message, "Go, return into Egypt, for all the men are dead that sought thy life."[103] The message was never to come. He was not to see Egypt again. This supposed course of events lends especial significance to the repeated[104] expression of his desire to return home. Otherwise it would have to be taken as a mere phrase, since no other obstacle is imaginable that would satisfactorily explain why he did not carry his heart's desire into effect.

I do not advance this theory on account of its plausibility, or because it helps us out of a difficulty. It is again a fragment from the Genizah[105] that suggests the thought and throws new light upon this very important period in Saadia's life. The nature of the work, of which the fragment in question originally formed a part, cannot be defined

[101] For a detailed account of this matter see the learned study of Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon,* London, 1908. For the book against Anan see below, pp. 263, 379.

[102] Comp. for instance Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arab. Literatur,* I, 232, no. 5, and Steinschneider, *JQR.,* XIII, 97.

[103] Exodus, 4, 19.

[104] So in the two fragmentary letters discussed above (pp. 55 f.) and in another fragment translated in the following pages.

[105] Schechter, *Saadyana,* pp. 133-135.

with certainty. What we have consists of two disconnected leaves, containing together fifty lines, written in Biblical style and provided with vowels and accents, a method observable in other writings of Saadia.[106] Unfortunately, just where our interest grows keenest, several lines are mutilated beyond repair. From what remains legible it appears that it formed part of some sort of a diary, evidently written by Saadia on his journey from Babylonia to Aleppo,[107] and thus preceding the two letters discussed above,

[106] Schechter, *l. c.*, p. 133, n. 2.

[107] The exact time of this journey is not stated, but circumstances point to the winter of the year 920/21. The fact that it was winter is mentioned explicitly in the second leaf of the fragment (*Saadyana,* p. 135, l. 2), which contains also the information that the goal of the journey was the city of Aleppo, giving the route as follows: Babylon (probably Bagdad, see Bornstein, p. 71, n. 2), Arbela (see Rapoport, *'Erek Millin,* p. 192, *s. v.* ארבילי), Mosul (see Bornstein, p. 71, n. 3). In the last city he met a "caravan of Arabs" coming from Aleppo, who described the hardships they had experienced on the road, adding that "many people died on the way on account of the heavy snow and the severe cold." This induced him to interrupt his travel and to remain for some time in Mosul, where he was asked to set down the genealogy of R. Judah the Patriarch, the compiler of the Mishnah, which he did (see below, p. 173, no. 3). Now we have seen above that he subsequently carried out his desire and actually visited Aleppo in the summer of 921. This makes it more than probable that he stayed in Mosul only during the preceding winter, taking up his interrupted journey as soon as the winter was over. Bornstein (p. 71), and Eppenstein (*Beiträge,* p. 90, n. 4) take the altogether untenable view, according to which the beginning of the fragment under discussion (*fol. 2 recto*) has reference to the time when Saadia was about to leave Egypt. The passage reads: . . . . כי נער אתה לא תדע צאת ובוא כי בן עשרים ("Thou art young, knowest not how to go out or come in, for thou art twenty . . . . ") and obviously represents part of the argument of those who tried to keep him back from the proposed journey. In the dotted space after the word עשרים (twenty) the aforementioned authors supply the word ושלש (three), because at the time of Saadia's departure from Egypt (915) he was 23 years old. This interpretation is entirely out of the question, for Saadia immediately goes on to say that all the persuasions notwithstanding he left Bagdad (see above) for Arbela. This, as we have shown above, must have taken place during the winter 920/21, when Saadia was already

which were written subsequent to Saadia's stay in Aleppo. The first leaf, which contains a prayer for protection on the way, seems to have been written at the outset of the journey. With a few words added in some places where the original shows a lacuna, it runs as follows:

". . . . and now look down from Thy holy tabernacle[108] and be jealous for Thy Torah; [for excellent is][109] her teaching. Not for the sake of [Thy servant, O God], but for the sake of Thy great name by which he is called,[110] [guide me in][111] Thy holy Torah, which Thou hast given to us; truly, Thou hast tried my heart and known me, hast searched me and found that [I am innocent].[112] Now Thy servant has set his face to go into the land of Canaan and the land of [Babylonia], for he heard that . . . ."

Here, where we expect to hear his reason for having emigrated to the land of Canaan, our curiosity is baffled by a blank of about two lines, and we remain as wise as before. From the last three words, however, it may be concluded with some degree of probability that it was something new and

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28, or 29 years of age, and the Hebrew text should be supplied accordingly. That a man of that age should be described as נער (youth) is not surprising. Saadia imitates throughout the style of the Bible, where the word is often applied to men of mature age; comp. e. g. Genesis, 41, 12, where Joseph, who according to Gen. 41, 1 and 41, 46, was at the time referred to by the chief butler 28 years old, is called נער. In the passage before us in particular Saadia makes use of the verse I Kings, 3, 7. It may be added in this connection that in the Midrash on Proverbs, 1, 4, the rabbis of the Mishnah dispute the question how long one may be considered a נער, R. Meir setting the limit at 25, and R. 'Akiba at 30. [See regarding this note *Postscript*, pp. 422 f.].

[108] Deuteronomy, 26, 15. As the following references will show, the author uses whole phrases of the Bible throughout.

[109] The passage seems to have read as follows: וקנא לתורת]ך כי נג[ידים הגיונה; comp. Proverbs, 8, 6; Ps. 19, 15; 49, 4. The last word might perhaps be better translated by meditation. There is, however, the difficulty that in the Bible the suffix in all passages refers to the individual, while here it is made to refer to the Torah.

[110] Comp. Deut., 28, 10. Saadia uses the same phrase also in the *Sefer ha-Gālui* (*Saadyana*, 6, ll. 11-12).

[111] Comp. Ps., 5, 9; 139, 24.

[112] Comp. Ps., 139, 1, 23.

unexpected that had happened and made him feel insecure at home. The following lines seem to support this view:

"And now, O Lord, that Thou hast taken me out of my city, mayest Thou lead me to my desire, and bring me back in peace to the house of my father. Turn me not away empty from before Thee,[113] for in the shadow of Thy mercy I take refuge.[114] O prosper the way which I go,[115] save me from the hands of the enemy and the ambush,[116] and provide all my needs as those were provided who went forth out of Egypt[117] . . . so that my persecutors may be confounded, and my enemies be put to shame and say not in their heart, Aha . . . . Hear, O God, the supplications of Thy servant and let not his enemies say, Our hand is exalted . . . ."[118]

While much of this language may be accounted for by the desire of the author to imitate the Biblical style, it is highly improbable that this was the sole motive of the whole composition. At any rate we see here not only that the writer had bitter enemies, but also that he was desirous of returning to his father's house and prayed for the opportunity to do so. This surely indicates that his stay in Asia was an enforced one.

How long Saadia was separated from his family subsequent to the writing of the quoted letters to his pupils cannot

[113] Comp. 2 Sam., 1, 22; Is., 55, 11.

[114] Comp. Ps. 57, 2; 61, 5.

[115] Gen., 24, 42.

[116] This line is part of the prayer prescribed in the Talmud *Berakōt*, 29*b* for one who sets out on a journey (תפלת הדרך).

[117] In these words Saadia evidently alludes to his departure from Egypt, comparing himself to the Israelites in the narration of the Bible, whose needs were provided for in the desert.

[118] The text is here badly mutilated. I would suggest the following reading: והשיגני כל ת[קותי רוד]פי למען יכלמו[נצח ואויבי[חנם יבושו. החפר]פני שוטני ואל יאמרו בלבם האח בלעגוהו]פנה אל חשקי[ואל]תפן אל קשיי אל תב[יש]ני]. For the phrases here used by Saadia see Jeremiah, 17, 18; 20, 11; Psalms, 35, 4; 34, 6; 71,13; 35, 25; 69, 17; Deuteronomy, 9, 27; Psalms, 119, 31, 116. The word זקף (l. 7) does not belong to the text, but is probably a gloss referring to the placing of an accent known under this name.

be learned from the available sources. I am tempted to believe that his reunion with his family took place on Babylonian soil only a few months after the date of the letters, that is, in the summer of the year 922. In a letter of the Palestinian Ben Meir, whose bitter quarrel with Saadia will occupy us in the next chapter, the writer, in an effort to belittle his opponent, informs his friends, among other things of a very discreditable nature, that Saadia's father was "*thrust* out of Egypt and died in Jaffa."[119] It is quite possible that Saadia's father undertook the journey to his son with all the members of the latter's family, but, being advanced in age, could not endure the hardships of the long journey, and died on the way. Ben Meir's letter was written toward the end of the summer 922.[120] There was then about half a year's interval between this date and that of Saadia's correspondence with his pupils in Egypt (January-March, 922), during which time his family may have moved to the East. This view commends itself for several reasons. The year 922 was of decisive importance in Saadia's career. In the bitter war waged at that time between Ben Meir on the one side and the Babylonian Geonim on the other, regarding the right of fixing the Jewish calendar, it was Saadia's energetic support of the latter that brought about their ultimate victory. That his participation could be of such consequence is proof that he had already gained great influence among the Jews of the Orient. The Babylonian authorities no doubt had by that time recognized his resolute character and his great intellectual power, and they probably prevailed upon him to abandon forever his plan of returning to Egypt. Thereupon, having decided to make his permanent abode in Babylonia, it was natural to have his family follow him thither. It is also more than probable that he was then offered a position of honor and income within the academic circle, which he accepted.

[119] Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 20, n. 4; Bornstein, p. 90, n. 5; above, note 7.

[120] A few days before the Jewish New Year; see Bornstein, pp. 12 f.

In a letter dated Fifth day, *19th of Tammuz, 1233, Seleucidan Era* (=July, 922), of which only the closing lines and the signature have been preserved among the fragments of the Genizah, Saadia adds to his name, so far as known for the first time, the title *'Allūf Yeshū'āh* (=Master of Salvation).[121] The title *'Allūf* was usually accorded in the Babylonian colleges to the scholars who were third in rank after the Gaon. Besides, it was sometimes granted as a special distinction to foreign scholars, particularly Palestinians.[122] The addition *Yeshū'āh* would indicate that the title was given to Saadia as a distinction, in appreciation of his services in the controversy with Ben Meir.[123] I am inclined to believe that Saadia was actually made one of the *'Allūfîm* of the Sura academy, and thus became a regular member of the institution about six years prior to his installation as Gaon. The statement of R. Sherira, Gaon of Pumbedita (968-987), that Saadia "was not one of the scholars of the college, but from Egypt,"[124] does not mean that previous to his installation he did not belong to the rank and file of the academic body, but only, as we might say to-day, that he was not a graduate of the college; while the asser-

[121] Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 15, especially Bornstein, p. 72, n. 2; comp. Müller, Introduction to Saadia's תרי"ג מצות (in *Oeuvres complètes,* vol. IX, p. xxi); below, note 332. I do not know on what ground Bornstein, p. 12, asserts that when the Exilarch turned to Saadia for assistance against Ben Meir Saadia had already been bearing the title *'Allūf.*

[122] Comp. Ginzberg, *JE., s. v. 'Alluf;* Epstein, *RÉJ.,* XLII, 192, n. 4; Bornstein, p. 48, n. 11; Poznański. עניני שונים, pp. 50, 62, 67; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 103. It is therefore not necessary to assume with Harkavy, *Oeuvres complètes,* vol. IX, p. xli (see also Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 15, n. 1) that *'Allūf* was the title of Saadia's father, comp. also Harkavy תשובות הגאונים, p. 377.

[123] Bornstein, p. 72, n. 2, thinks that the title was given to him in recognition of his successful defense of traditional Judaism against Ḳaraism. So far as the available historical records go, Saadia's assumption of the title coincides with the time of the Ben Meir controversy.

[124] *Epistle of R. Sherira,* toward the end (Neubauer, *MJC,* I, 40, top).

tion of Abraham b. David (1160), according to which Saadia was brought directly from Egypt and installed as Gaon, is based upon a misinterpretation of R. Sherira's statement, and does not deserve credence.[125] It is altogether improbable that Saadia was living in Egypt when called to the Gaonate[126]; far more credible is it that he was made *'Allūf* during the Ben Meir controversy, and six years later rose from this position to that of Head of the Academy.

The foregoing discussion has carried us a little beyond the point with which we are immediately concerned. It was necessary to anticipate somewhat, in order to show that during the years of his sojourn in the East, Saadia maintained the same high standard of learning and literary productivity that had made him a conspicuous figure in his native country. Thus he became early an eminent factor in the intellectual and religious life of the Jews of the Orient.

There is evidence that some of his works were written during this period, though no definite dates can be given.[127] The first few years he probably spent in Palestine, perhaps in Tiberias, where he made the acquaintance of

[125] Comp. Poznański, *RÉJ.*, XLVIII (1904), 149, n. 3; Bornstein, p. 72; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 69, note.

[126] This is the view also of A. Epstein in *RÉJ.*, XLII (1901), 201, who thinks that Saadia returned to Egypt after the struggle with Ben Meir was over; comp. also recently Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* pp. 103, 116 f. As said above, there is no sufficient basis for this view. Eppenstein seems to base his view on the fact that the *Kitâb Al-Tamyîz,* one of Saadia's polemical works, was written in 926, which, he says, probably following Poznański (*JQR.*, X, 244, bottom), was "at *all events* done in Egypt." But Poznański wrote in 1898 before the letters of the Genizah came to light, and the passage from a work of Abraham b. Ḥiyya which he quotes there (p. 245) as proof, only gives the year (926), not the country of the composition. If our assumption, that Al-Mas'ûdi met Saadia in Tiberias is correct (see above, p. 36) we should have additional proof that in 926, the year in which the work mentioned above was written, Saadia was in the East; for it was in that year that Mas'ûdi is known to have visited Tiberias; comp. above, note 34.

[127] Regarding the chronological order of Saadia's writings see below, note 293.

'Abû Kathîr, who became his teacher.[128] In Tiberias, Saadia must have come in close contact with the School of Masorites,[129] especially with Ben Asher,[130] the last and most distinguished member of this school, of whose grammatical views Saadia wrote a refutation.[131] In all probability it was there that he made the personal acquaintance of Ben Meir,[132] with whom he was subsequently engaged in a bitter literary feud. There he may have met also some Muhammedan writers as well as learned Ḳaraites, whose writings he refuted in special works.[133] All these men must have served as a stimulus to Saadia in his literary pursuits, and thus, directly or indirectly have furthered his scholarly career.

Special mention should be made of an eminent scholar whose name is well known in the history of Jewish philosophy, and whose works and personality had a decided influence on Saadia—the philosopher and controversialist

[128] See above, pp. 36 f.

[129] Comp. Bacher, *Anfänge,* p. 50. Possibly Abû Kathîr himself, as the identification with Judah b. 'Alân would indicate, was a member of the Masoretic school, though to judge from the nature of the questions that were disputed between him and Al-Mas'ûdi (comp. Goldziher, *RÉJ.,* XLVII, 41) he appears to have been a philosopher; see above, note 35.

[130] Comp. Graetz, *Geschichte,* V, 4th edition, p. 324 (English version, III, 207); Bacher, *JE.,* X, 582.

[131] Bacher, *l. c.,* doubts, however, that it was done in a separate work; see below, *Bibliography,* section VIII, p. 399.

[132] Comp. Bornstein, p. 60, n. 3; see also Poznański, *RÉJ.,* XLVIII (1904), 149, n. 2.

[133] Comp. Poznański, *JQR.,* X (1898), 238 ff. The Arabic historian Hamza al-'Isfâhânî (beginning of the tenth century) tells in his *Chronicles* (ed. Gottwald, St. Petersburg-Leipsic, 1844-1848), the fifth chapter of which is devoted to the history of the Jews, and was translated into German by Steinschneider (*MGWJ.,* 1845, p, 271 ff.), that in 920-921 he met, at Bagdad, a celebrated Jewish scholar, named Zedekiah, "who communicated to him a short synopsis of the old Jewish chronology"; see *JQR.,* XIII, 299. Many other Jewish scholars may have lived at that time in Bagdad with whom Saadia probably came in contact.

David Ibn Merwân Al-Muḳammiṣ,[134] of Raḳḳa, in Mesopotamia.[135] Al-Muḳammiṣ is the first known Jewish writer on metaphysics in the Orient. Various philosophic theories of his that have recently become known through lengthy extracts from his works, show a striking resemblance to theories propounded by Saadia.[136] This may not be absolute proof of an interdependence of the two authors, as both may have drawn upon common Arabic sources; but in addition to this identity of doctrines, which makes a personal or literary relationship very probable, there is also the testimony of Judah b. Barzillai, a noted scholar of the eleventh century, and author of an important commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah*.[137] Judah incorporated several chapters of one of Muḳammiṣ's works into his own, and in introducing him to his readers he says: "I do not know, whether he [Muḳammiṣ] was one of the Geonim, but I have heard that R. Saadia, of blessed memory, having been his contemporary, knew him personally and *was instructed by him*" (ולמד ממנו). Judah adds that he is "not quite sure about it," which, if the Hebrew style is interpreted strictly, seems to refer, not only

[134] For details on Muḳammiṣ see Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XIII, 450 and *Arabische Literatur*, pp. 37, 338, bottom; Poznański, *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur*, pp. 39 f.; Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XV, 682, 688; XVI, 411; comp. also above, note 33, the quotation from Ibn Ḥazm. A synopsis of Al-Muḳammiṣ's philosophy was given by Schreiner, *Der Kalâm in der jüdischen Literatur*, Berlin, 1895, pp. 22 ff.; comp. also Grätz, *Geschichte*, V (4), 322, note 5; Harkavy, לקורות הכתות בישראל, in the Hebrew translation of Graetz's History, vol. III, pp. 498 f.

[135] See Harkavy, as quoted in the preceding note. A place by the name of Raḳḳa is, according to some, also in Egypt, so that Muḳammiṣ, too, might be a native of that country, and an emigrant to Palestine and Babylonia; see, however, Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur*, p. 37, n. 1, and § 25; *idem*, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, p. 378, n. 69; for other references see above, note 37. In the short fragment of a work of Muḳammiṣ published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XV, 682, Muḳammiṣ is called אלשיראזי, *i. e.* of Shirâz, in Persia.

[136] Schreiner, *Der Kalâm*, pp. 22 ff.

[137] Published by Halberstam, Berlin, 1885. The passage referred to in the text is on p. 77; comp. Goldziher, *REJ.*, XLII (1903), 184, n. 2, where 178 is a misprint for 78.

to the last words, but to the whole statement. Because of this we may accept the report as true, especially as the contemporaneity of the two authors has in the meantime been established from other sources.[138] Whether Saadia met Muḳammiṣ while traveling through the cities of Syria and Babylonia, or at a later period, when he had settled in Sura, cannot be decided, and it is irrelevant. The former view seems more probable, and for that reason the relation between the two has been discussed in this place.

[138] From a work of the Ḳaraite Abu Jûsuf Ja'ḳûb al-Ḳirḳisâni (10th century), see Harkavy's additions to the Hebrew edition of Graetz's History, III, 499; Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon,* pp. 8-11.

Chapter IV

SAADIA'S CONTROVERSY WITH BEN MEIR (4681-82=921-922)

The subject of Saadia's controversy with Ben Meir forms an entirely new chapter in the history of the Jews in the Orient; for it is only half a century since the very name of Ben Meir appeared on the scene for the first time, while the literature on the controversy was brought to light only within the last two decades.[139] In connection with the present work the material on this topic, which came from the Genizah, is of the greatest importance from many points of view. It was through the discovery of this material that we first learned of the movements and activities of Saadia prior to his appointment as Gaon. For nearly all the details about his life and work following his departure from Egypt, discussed in the preceding chapter, we depend on these finds as the only source. Aside from the historical facts, which we incidentally learn from these singular documents on a remarkable political and religious struggle between the Palestinian and Babylonian authorities of the tenth century, we are granted a more complete picture of Saadia's character and personality than was obtainable before. Though

[139] The first notice of the existence of a man by the name of Ben Meir was brought to light by the noted Ḳaraite scholar Abraham Firkovich in an article on his discovery of fragments of Saadia's *'Agrōn* and the *Sēfer ha-Gālui,* published in the Hebrew periodical המליץ, St. Petersburg, 1868, nos. 26, 27, also separately under the peculiar title מבוא להקדמות רמות העולות . . . . ממצרים . . . . ארץ מולדתו של . . . . הרם"ג, Odessa, 1868; see Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 12, 136; Bornstein, p. 41. Firkovich quotes the passage from the *Sefer ha-Gālui* (now in Harkavy, *l. c.,* p. 151, last line) in which the name Ben Meir occurs, but nothing could be learned from that passage about his identity and his relations to Saadia, until, a quarter of a century later, the literature on his controversy with the latter was unearthed. For the details of that literature see below, pp. 409-419.

we cannot possibly accept as true the immoderate charges made against Saadia by the writers of some of these documents, they are nevertheless of value, inasmuch as they present him to us in the light in which he was seen by some of his contemporaries,[140] thus enabling us to make up our account of him after a careful consideration of the facts on both sides.

Before the two opposing parties are arrayed in their prolonged contest, an explanation of the historical causes that led to the struggle is unavoidable. Otherwise I should prefer to escape discussion of a subject that ranks as one of the obscurest and most complicated in Jewish literature. Besides, the origin and history of the Jewish calendar does not readily lend itself to a popular presentation. Our purpose here will be served best by a brief summary of principles, avoiding as far as possible the details of computation.

It is generally accepted that the Jewish festivals were, in Biblical times, fixed by observation of both the sun and the moon. Gradually, certain astronomical rules were also brought into requisition, primarily as a test, corroborating or refuting the testimony of observation. Such rules are mentioned for the first time in the Book of Enoch, in the Book of Jubilees, in the Mishnah, and later in the two Talmudim. It has been authoritatively proved that in spite of a more advanced knowledge of astronomy the practice of fixing the new moon and the festivals by observation was in force as late as the latter part of the fifth century.[141] The right to announce the new moon after re-

[140] Though the aspersions and denunciations of Saadia are contained only in the letters of his chief opponent Ben Meir, it is a matter of course that the latter was not the only one who entertained such opinions of Saadia, but was the mouthpiece of a large following, especially in Palestine, where Saadia had lived for several years.

[141] See for the whole matter Bornstein's learned Introduction to his work, pp. 15 ff., and the important work of F. K. Ginzel, *Handbuch der mathematischen und technischen Chronologie,* II, Leipzig, 1911, pp. 63 ff.

ceiving and testing the witnesses who had observed its appearance was the prerogative of the Palestinian Patriarchs, and the repeated attempts of the authorities in Babylonia to arrogate this right unto themselves were promptly frustrated by interdicts from Palestine.[142] With the beginning of the fourth century, however, Palestine, owing to the terrible persecutions suffered at the hands of the Romans, gradually ceased to be the spiritual center of Jewry. Babylonia, where better conditions prevailed under the Persian rule, took its place, and the religious right to fix the calendar likewise passed over to the heads of its flourishing academies, though not without protests from Palestine.[143] In Babylonia also, the practice of observation was continued until the time of the last Amoraim, although a practical system of reckoning had been known to scholars for more than a century. It was only after the close of the Babylonian Talmud, in the sixth or perhaps later, in the seventh century, that the observation of the moon was entirely given up, and a complete and final system of calendation introduced. This was adopted by all the Jews of the Diaspora, and has been accepted as binding down to the present day.[144]

The real originators of this calendar as well as the circumstances under which it was enforced are lost in the general obscurity of the history of the Oriental Jews during the first two centuries after the completion of the Talmud. It is certain, however, that the whole system of calendation, although promulgated in Babylonia, originated in Palestine.[145] There are indications that the Palestinian Jews felt sore at heart that they had to bow to the Babylonian authorities, whom they must have considered as usurpers of their inherited rights, and from time to time they must have tried to re-establish their lost authority, but in vain.[146]

[142] Bornstein, pp. 8 ff.

[143] Bornstein, p. 10; comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 158.

[144] Bornstein, pp. 17-19; Ginzel, II, 70 f.

[145] For a full account see Epstein, *Ha-Goren*, V, 120 ff.; see, however, Ginzel, II, 78.

[146] Bornstein, p. 10.

With the beginning of the tenth century the situation was again changed. The once flourishing Babylonian academies of Sura and Pumbedita, especially the former, owing to general conditions and to the lack of strong leaders, began to show a marked decline, so that the Sura academy was on the point of closing its doors, and the sister-academy in Pumbedita was greatly reduced in strength by a bitter struggle between its leading scholars and a pugnacious exilarch.[147] At this juncture a man of marked ability arose in Palestine, who, recognizing the propitious moment, sought to take advantage of the situation in order to restore its former prerogatives to his country.[148] This man was [Aaron?] [149] Ben Meir, a Palestinian by birth and the head of a school in his native land. He claimed to be a descendant of the Patriarchs of the house of Hillel, mentioning particularly R. Gamliel and R. Judah Hanasi as his progenitors.[150] With genuine scholarly attainments and considerable facility in writing he combined strong will and determined character; all of which gained for him great influence even outside of Palestine.

[147] The reports of Sherira Gaon and of Nathan the Babylonian regarding the quarrel in Pumbedita differ very essentially in many points. Various attempts at reconciling the two sources have been made. This is not the place to discuss the matter. See below, chapter V, and in particular Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 55.

[148] A. Epstein in *Ha-Goren,* V, 125 ff. (comp. *ZfhB.,* X, 67), presents the matter as if Ben Meir's motives in starting the conflict were purely scientific, that he tried to rectify what he considered erroneous in the established calendar. This view can be accepted only with great reservation. For whatever the merits of Ben Meir's calculation may have been, there is no doubt that his personal ambition and perhaps still more, his desire to reassert the authority of the Holy Land, played, consciously or unconsciously, a very important part in his contention. More than once in his letters he emphatically denies to the Babylonians the right to fix the calendar, which, he constantly reiterates, is the exclusive prerogative of his country; comp. below, note 158.

[149] The name Aaron in reference to Ben Meir occurs in a fragment of Saadia's *Sefer ha-Mō'adim.* The context, however, is rather unclear; comp. Bornstein, p. 58, n. 2; 111, bottom; Poznański, *RÉJ.,* LXVII (1914), 291, n. 1, and below, note 175.

[150] Bornstein, p. 58, n. 2; above, note 18.

In order to bring out Ben Meir's point of view it is necessary to explain some of the elementary rules of the Jewish calendar:

The Jewish lunar year consists of twelve alternating months, of 29 or 30 days, respectively. Such a year, counting 354 days, is called normal or *regular*. For certain reasons, to be explained presently, the year is sometimes made to count only 353 days, in which case it is designated as *deficient;* or a day is added, making 355, and then it is called *full*. To make a year full or deficient, the months of *Ḥeshwān* and *Kislēw* (approximately November and December) were selected for the necessary addition or subtraction. In a regular year *Ḥeshwān* always counts 29 and *Kislēw* 30 days (=59); in a full year a day is added to *Ḥeshwān* (=60), and in a deficient year a day is subtracted from *Kislēw* (=58). Whether a year is to be declared regular, full, or deficient depends upon four rules, called "Postponements," (דחיות) or the "Four Gates,"[151] These must be observed in the appointment of every Jewish New

[151] The Four Rules, for which see Ginzel, II, 91 f., are found together in a writing called ארבעה שערים, the Four Gates, because it treats of the four days of the week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday), on which alone *Rosh ha-Shanah* is allowed to fall, the days forming thus, as it were, the gates through which we enter into the respective new year. The original work of which the Four Gates formed a part, is lost. Nor can it be ascertained when and where or by whom it was composed. From the Ben Meir controversy we can see that as early as the beginning of the tenth century its authority was generally recognized. A certain Jose Al-Nahrawânî, probably a contemporary of Saadia, versified that part of the work which dealt with the Four Rules, and his versification also bears the name ארבעה שערים. Steinschneider discovered the work of Jose in a MS. at the Bodleian library, written in 1203, and published it in the periodical *Kerem Chemed,* IX (1856), 41. A. Epstein re-edited the same with copious notes in the *RÉJ.,* XLII (1901), 204-210. At the same time a commentary on Genesis and Exodus by Menahem b. Solomon (12th century) under the title מדרש שכל טוב was published by S. Buber (Berlin, 1901), wherein a different recension, of Palestinian origin, is found in connection with the verse Exod., 12, 2 (vol. II, 90-92). This recension was

Year's day (first of *Tishri,* approximately September). We shall here mention only the two rules necessary for the understanding of Ben Meir's attempted reform.

The first of these rules is that New Year's day should never be appointed on either a Sunday, or Wednesday, or Friday. Sunday is considered unfit, because with *Rosh ha-Shanah* falling thereon, the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles (*Hosha'na Rabbah*), on which the ceremony of "beating the willow-twigs" is an important part of the service, would fall on the Sabbath, and the observance of the ceremony could not be permitted. Wednesday and Friday are likewise inadmissible, because the Day of Atonement would then, to the great inconvenience of the people, fall on either Friday or Sunday immediately before or after the Sabbath. If, therefore, the new moon of the month of Tishri was observed in the night preceding one of these three days (Sunday, Wednesday, Friday), New-Year was proclaimed on the day following; a custom still in force now that calculation has been substituted for observation, the calendar having been fixed in agreement with this rule of Talmudic origin.[152]

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republished and fully discussed by Bornstein, pp. 26, 103-107; comp. also Epstein, *RÉJ.,* XLIV, 230-236, and *Ha-Goren,* V, 131. The same recension in a more concise form was published by Marx in his *Untersuchungen zum Siddur des Gaon R. Amram,* Berlin, 1908, pp. 18 f., from a MS. belonging to Sulzberger (originally Halberstam). In a fragment from the Genizah published by Schechter, *JQR.,* XIV, 498 (*Saadyana,* p. 128), which contains an ancient list of books, Saadia is credited with a book by the name of ארבעה שערים. This is not identical with the fragment published by Schechter (*ib.,* pp. 128-130), which, though likewise discussing the Four Gates, is of a polemical character and forms part of the *Sefer Zikkaron;* see below, p. 415, no. 9; comp. below, pp. 168 f., nos. 1-2, and *Bibliography, IV,* p. 352, no. 2. Saadia mentions the ארבעה שערים also in his Arabic Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (ed. Lambert, p. 80); comp. Bornstein, p. 25, n. 2.

A short but clear exposition of the Four Rules was given also in Hebrew, by L. Steinitz, *Bikkūrē ha-Ittim,* 1822, pp. 236-240, and recently by Ch. Tschernowitz, קצור התלמוד, Lausanne, 1919, pp. 283-288.

[152] *Rosh ha-Shanah, 20a;* comp. Bornstein, pp. 119-21; Ginzel, II, 67.

The second rule is that in order to proclaim a New-Year's Day it is necessary, that the new moon be seen *before noon* of this day. If the new moon is not observed until exact noon, or later, no matter on what day of the week, the New Year has to be postponed to the following day. If that happens to be one of the three days declared inadmissible for *Rosh ha-Shanah,* the festival is of course postponed for two days. The supposed reason for this rule is that it takes fully six hours from the moment the new moon is caught sight of from some place of vantage until it becomes again visible. Now if the conjunction (*Mōlād*), that is, the meeting of the moon and the sun in the same degree of the zodiac, takes place at 12 (noon) sharp, or still later, there is no chance for the moon to become visible until sunset (six o'clock), when the Jewish astronomical day is considered over. In strictness, this rule (which is also Talmudic),[153] has pertinence only to a system depending on observation; but, as stated before, the rules of calendric calculation were made to agree with the original rules of practice, though the reasons given may have lost their value.

It will be readily understood from the above that whenever New Year is postponed, the year is made shorter, being reduced to 353 days and thus turned into a deficient year. The month of *Tishri,* however, is not made to suffer by this reduction. As stated before, the two days are taken off from the next following months, *Heshwān* and *Kislēw,* which are made to count only twenty-nine days each. To use the technical term, they are both made *deficient.* It may be added to complete our survey that to bring the solar year and the lunar year into coincidence in a certain cycle (19 years), an intercalary month is inserted into the Jewish year at necessary periods, making a *leap* year of 383 to 385 days.

[153] *Rosh ha-Shanah, 20b*: נולד קודם חצות בידוע שנראה סמוך לשקיעת החמה לא נולד קודם חצות בידוע שלא נראה סמוך לשקיעת החמה. The meaning of this passage, however, is not clear, which gave rise to differing interpretations; see Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 129 f.; below, note 164.

When observation was replaced by calculation, the calendar did not, indeed, have to be fixed by the authorities from year to year. Anybody familiar with the rules on which it was based could determine many years ahead on what day of the week New Year or any other festival would fall in a given year. In fact it was most essential to know, in order to arrange the calendar for any year, on what day *Rosh ha-Shanah* would fall two years later.

In the year 4681 of the Jewish era (=921 common era) it was anticipated that in the year 4684 (September, 923) the rule of two days' postponement, described above, would come into operation. Calculation showed that if observation had been still in practice, the new moon of *Tishri* could not be observed till about thirteen or fourteen minutes after meridian on the Sabbath. Consequently the accepted rules required, observation or no observation, that New Year be postponed to Monday. Now, it must be borne in mind that there is a difference of four, occasionally of five, or even of six days (leaving fractions out of consideration) between two successive years. That is to say, the festivals of a given year fall from four to six days *later in the week* than those of the preceding year. This is due to the fact that fifty weeks of the regular common year and fifty-four weeks of the regular leap year contain, the first only 350, and the second 378 days, while a complete year of twelve regular months counting alternately twenty-nine and thirty days, contains 354 days, and thirteen such months make a year of 384 days. If, therefore, in 923, the year under consideration, New Year was to fall on Monday, *Rosh ha-Shanah* of the previous year (922) must take place four days earlier, *i. e.*, on Thursday. Again, in 922 New Year had to be approximately six days later than in 921, because the year 921 happened to be a leap year. This would bring New Year of 921 on Friday; but as Friday had been declared unfit, Thursday had to be substituted. To sum up: the accepted order of the calendar in those three years was as follows: In 4682 (921/22) New Year on Thursday, the year *full* (385 days),* that is, *Hesh-*

* Because it was leap year, 355 + 30.

wān and *Kislēw* containing each thirty days, and Passover (which is also to be mentioned for reasons that will become obvious later), falling on a Tuesday.* In 4683 (922/23) New Year on Thursday, the year *regular* (354 days), *Ḥeshwān* and *Kislēw* counting together 59 days (29+30), and Passover on Sabbath.** In 4684 (923/24) New Year Monday (Postponement), the year *deficient* (353 days), *Ḥeshwān* and *Kislēw* counting together fifty-eight days (29+29), and Passover on Tuesday.§

We may now return to Ben Meir, but for a full understanding of his position it is necessary to mention one more point, namely that in the system of the Jewish calendar the hour is divided not into 3600 seconds but into 1080 *ḥalāḳîm* (parts).

As a learned man, the head of an academy, Ben Meir was naturally well informed on the question of the Jewish calendar. The four principal rules of calendation had been known for centuries,[154] and in the main he recognized them as binding. All that he apparently asked, when he began the controversy, was a modification of the rule which required that to proclaim any day as *Rosh Ḥodesh* the new moon must be discovered (or, in times of reckoning, be due to appear) *before* noon.[155] Following either another computation or a definite Palestinian tradition,[156] he added 642 "parts" (about thirty-five minutes) to the time limit, so that if, for instance, the new moon of *Tishri* was due to appear on the Sabbath *at noon* or within the 642 *ḥalāḳîm after noon,*

* In Hebrew this order is marked by the letters ה"שג; ה, the fifth letter of the alphabet, denoting Thursday, the fifth day of the week; ש stands for שְׁלֵמָה, full, and ג, the third letter, for Tuesday (Passover).

** In Hebrew הכ"ז, ה = Thursday, כ is an abbreviation of כְּסִדְרָה, which means regular, and ז, the seventh letter, = Sabbath.

§ Hebrew letters בח"ג, ב = Monday, ח stands for חֲסֵרָה, meaning deficient, and ג for Tuesday.

[154] See Bornstein, p. 25, n. 2; Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 132, and above, note 151.

[155] See Bornstein, p. 64, n. 4.

[156] See below, p. 80.

no postponement should take place. The Sabbath would thus be declared *Rosh ha-Shanah,* while according to the accepted calendar the festival had to be postponed until Monday (Sabbath being ineligible on account of the belated appearance of the new moon, and Sunday on account of rule 1).

This being precisely what was due to happen in *Tishri* of the year 4684 (September 923), Ben Meir, believing the time favorable for the long-sought overthrow of the Babylonian authority, came out in the summer[157] of 4681 (921) with the declaration that *Ḥeshwān* and *Kislēw* of the ensuing year (4682 = November and December 921) should both be made *deficient.* Now the year 4682 could be declared deficient only when the year 4684 was to be declared full; that is, if *Rosh ha-Shanah* of the last named year was not to be postponed on account of a belated new moon, but was to take place on the Sabbath of the new moon's appearance. In fact it was the anticipated postponement of the New Year of 4684 which Ben Meir attacked. He contended that inasmuch as in that year the new moon was due only 237 *ḥalāḳîm* (about fourteen minutes) after midday and thus much in advance of the allowed 642 parts, it was not to be considered as late, and hence no postponement could be admissible.*

Such, and apparently so technical if not trivial, was the actual issue between Ben Meir and Babylon.

The question forces itself upon us: What was Ben Meir's reason for the addition of 642 parts to the given time limit? It is hardly credible that a learned and pious man, as Ben Meir undoubtedly was, should have undertaken to change essentially one of the most sacred religious institutions of the Jewish people, one upon which depended the celebration of the festivals in their proper season, unless there were

[157] Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 138, end of note 1.

* Ben Meir's order for the three years was accordingly: 682 הח"א, i. e., New Year Thursday (ה), deficient (ח), Passover Sunday (א); 683 גכ"ה, New Year Tuesday (ג), regular (כ), Passover Thursday (ה); 684 זש"ג, New Year Saturday (ז), full (ש), Passover Tuesday (ג).

strong reasons to justify his action.[158] Moreover, it would have been the most injudicious step for a leader to take, as he could foresee that no conscientious Jew would follow him, unless the religious expediency of his procedure was proved. As a matter of fact, many Jewish communities in Palestine and outside[159] accepted Ben Meir's view, and soon after were ready to celebrate, or actually did celebrate, the Passover of the year 4682 on Sunday instead of Tuesday.

Various views have been advanced in explanation of the matter; among them that the accepted calendar being based on the time in the city of Babylon, where noon is approximately 56 minutes earlier than in Jerusalem, Ben Meir, claiming Jerusalem as the right basis, added 642 parts (35 minutes) *partly* to offset the difference.[160] Against this it has been properly pointed out[161] that the fixing of the calendar was originally the prerogative of Palestine, and it is therefore inconceivable that it should have been based on Babylonian time.[162] Nor is there any proof that later Babylonian authorities assumed to transfer the basis from Jerusalem to Babylon. Besides, if this was the reason for the addition, Ben Meir would certainly not have failed to mention it. Finally, the addition of precisely 642 parts (35 minutes instead of 56) would after all be an arbitrary and futile act.

[158] Ben Meir guards himself against the reproach that his desire to re-establish the authority of the Holy Land was the only reason for his reforms, by pointing out to his opponents the correctness of his calculation; comp. Bornstein, p. 51, n. 6, and above, note 148.

[159] As may be seen from a letter of Saadia to three Rabbis in Egypt, published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVI, 290-297, the Egyptian communities too, or at least some of them, during the time of the quarrel celebrated the festivals according to the computation of Ben Meir; comp. also Bornstein, p. 12.

[160] Bornstein, pp. 20, 28, 34 ff.

[161] Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 119 ff.

[162] This view is maintained by D. Sidersky in his recent work, *Étude sur l'origine astronomique de la chronologie juive,* Paris, 1911; comp. his article in the periodical הצופה מארץ הגר, III (Budapest, 1913), 33, 37, top.

Another, more acceptable explanation is that Ben Meir's real purpose was to reduce the number of postponements provided for in the accepted calendar.[163] These postponements were, in his opinion, frequently the cause of celebrating the festivals at a time other than that prescribed in the Torah. Most of them resulted from the rule concerning the belated new moon, and when this operated in connection with another rule, it might readily necessitate a postponement for two days. Finding that a slight extension of the time set for the appearance of the moon around mid-day would greatly reduce the number of such postponements, he considered it a religious duty to issue a proclamation to this effect. The claim that the rule opposed by him was based on the authority of the Talmud did not appeal to Ben Meir, as the passage in question is rather obscure and allows of differing interpretations.[164]

Plausible as this explanation seems to be, it is still difficult to see why he should have selected exactly the number of 642 for his addition, and the suggestion has therefore been made that in this respect Ben Meir relied on a definite Palestinian tradition.[165] Various passages in the controversial letters dealing with the subject seem to support this view. It is quite possible that others before Ben Meir had attempted to rectify the calendar by the same addition of 642 parts, but that the literary records, if there were such, have not been preserved.

At this point the subject of the calendar may be dismissed, and we may revert to the discussion of the course of events connected therewith, which led to the defeat of Ben Meir and ultimately to the rise of Saadia to the Gaonate.

Ben Meir's intention to make *Ḥeshwān* and *Kislēw* of the year 4682 deficient and to have the Passover of the same year celebrated two days earlier than that fixed by the Babylonian authorities (Sunday instead of Tuesday) became

[163] Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 125 ff.

[164] See above, note 153. A new interpretation of the passage is offered by Sidersky, הצופה מארץ הגר, III, 41; comp. Ginzel, II, 514.

[165] See above, p. 77; Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 133.

known in the summer of the year 4681 (921). In what way he had manifested this intention, cannot be ascertained from the available material. At that time it seems he had not yet issued an official proclamation.[166] The rumor reached Saadia in Aleppo. He at once addressed several letters to Ben Meir, demonstrating to him the correctness of the established calendar and warning him against the change advocated. This is reported by Saadia himself in the two letters which he addressed during the subsequent winter to his pupils in Egypt.[167] He further informs us, in the same letters, that in Bagdad, whither he had gone from Aleppo, he learned that his repeated warnings had had no effect on Ben Meir, who had meantime issued his official proclamation, much to the perturbation of the Babylonian Geonim. The date of Ben Meir's proclamation[168] is not given by Saadia. In all probability it was issued on *Hosha'na Rabbah* (the seventh day of the feast of Tabernacles) in the year 4682 (autumn, 921), on which day, as is known from other sources, it was customary among the Palestinian Jews of that period to assemble annually on the Mount of Olives (east of Jerusalem) for prayer and solemn processions around the mount (Haḳḳāfōt). The occasion was used for the discussion of the

[166] Epstein, *ibidem,* p. 138, end of n. 1.

[167] Bornstein, pp. 68, 70.

[168] The sources do not explicitly mention Ben Meir's proclamation. In his first letter Ben Meir speaks of the proclamation of his son (Bornstein, p. 51, line 10: הכריז חמודנו), which, as we know from Saadia's *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim* (Bornstein, p. 60), took place about three months later, in *Tēbēt* (comp. Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 138, n. 1, as against Bornstein). In his second letter, however, he speaks of a "proclamation of his pupils on the Mount of Olives" (הכרזת תלמידינו בהר הזיתים; Bornstein, p. 91, bottom; 92, top), which seems to refer to a previous proclamation on *Hosha'na Rabbah;* comp. the text recently published by A. Guillaume, *JQR.,* N. S., vol. V. (1914-1915), p. 555, l. 15. In the second letter of Saadia (Bornstein, p. 70) we also read twice הכריזם with reference to Ben Meir. It is possible, however, that the writers had in mind the proclamation of Ben Meir's son; comp. below, *Appendix,* no. 9, pp. 415 ff.

various religious and communal needs of the people, and decisions as to future actions were adopted.

As soon as the news of this proclamation reached Babylon the Exilarch David ben Zakkai, in conjunction with the Geonim of both academies and probably also Saadia,[169] addressed an official letter to Ben Meir setting forth in urgent words the validity of the established calendar and warning him against the contemplated change.[170] At the same time the Geonim sent out circular letters to the various Jewish communities, advising them to abide by the old order, and not to heed the innovations proposed.

It was about this period that Saadia wrote to his Egyptian pupils. The first half of his letter was given above (pp. 55 f.); the second reads as follows:

"Know that when I was yet in Aleppo, some pupils came from Ba'al Gad [171] and brought the news that Ben Meir intends to proclaim *Heshwān* and *Kislēw* deficient. I did not believe it, but as a precaution I wrote to him in the summer [not to do so]. The Exilarch, the heads of the academies, all the *'Allūfim,*[172] teachers and scholars,[173] likewise agreed to proclaim *Heshwān* and *Kislēw* full, and that Passover be celebrated on Thursday. In conjunction with their letters I

[169] This results from a passage in Ben Meir's letter (Bornstein, p. 50, l. 8: והמתחבר אליהם סעיד בן יוסף אלדלאצי). It is possible, however, that Ben Meir refers here to letters he received directly from Saadia, who, as stated, wrote to him from Aleppo.

[170] For the chronology of the various letters see below, pp. 410 ff.

[171] A town at the foot of the Lebanon Mountains (Joshua, 11, 17; see Dillmann, *ad locum*). It is mentioned also by Judah Al-Ḥarizi, *Taḥkemōni,* makâma 30, beginning, and in the *Itinerary* of Benjamin of Tudela, ed. London, 1840, p. 27; comp. also *JQR.,* XVI (1904), 732, n. 3.

[172] For the meaning of this title see the references above, note 122.

[173] The phrase מבין עם תלמיד is taken from I Chronicles, 25, 8. The word תלמיד in the usage of Arabic-speaking Jews has not always the common meaning of *pupil,* but more often designates a recognized *scholar;* comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 32, n. 4; Davidson, *Sepher Shaashuim,* New York, 1914, p. cx.

too wrote to most of the great cities,[174] in order to fulfill my duty. Persist ye also in this matter and close up this breach, and do not rebel against the command of God. None of the people dare to profane the festivals of God wilfully, to eat leavened bread on Passover, and eat, drink, and work on the Day of Atonement. May it be the will [of the Lord] that there be no stumbling-block and no pitfall in your place or in any other place in Israel. Pray, answer this letter and tell me all your affairs and your well-being. May your peace grow and increase forever!"

Here we have Saadia's own testimony as to the part he took in the struggle, and the rank to which he had attained among the Babylonian authorities at this period. Not only did they invite his co-operation in signing their official letters in order to confer special weight upon their ordinances, but Saadia issued such letters on his own account to the largest congregations in and outside of Babylon—a proof of the great fame and popularity he must have enjoyed in Jewry in general.

Meanwhile Ben Meir, far from heeding the interdicts of Babylonia, repeated his attack by sending his son[175] to Jerusalem, to proclaim there, for the second time, the proposed changes of the calendar. To the charges of the Geonim and of Saadia he replied in a disrespectful and aggressive tone, denying their authority in matters of the calendar, which, he claimed, should be left, as in former times, in the hands of Palestinian scholars. In a lengthy letter to his adherents in Babylonia, in which he sets forth

[174] Schechter, *Saadyana*, p. 25; Bornstein, p. 69: גם אנכי כתבתי עם אגרותיהם אל רוב המדינות האדירות.

[175] Nothing definite is known about Ben Meir's sons to whom Ben Meir refers as his "darlings" (חמודיי), while Saadia calls them עגלים! See below, note 188; Bornstein, p. 67, n. 2. According to Poznański, *REJ.*, LXVI, 67, a son of Ben Meir by the name of Abraham was the founder of the Palestinian Gaonate in the year 945. He occupied the position several years, and was succeeded by his son Aaron, who was named after his grandfather; see above, note 149.

with much detail the reasons for his reforms, he pours out his whole wrath on Saadia in particular, denouncing him and "his arrogant followers" in scathing terms. This is also significant of the rôle Saadia evidently played in the affair. In the meantime the feast of Passover was approaching. The congregations were bewildered by commands and countermands.[176] Some prepared to celebrate the festival on the date set by Ben Meir, others stood up for the accepted calendar. A serious rupture was imminent in the ranks of Jewry, not dissimilar to that brought about previously by the Ḳaraites. Saadia again addressed a letter to his pupils in Egypt,[177] and probably also to various communities elsewhere, imploring them to remain steadfast and to abide by the regulations of the Geonim. To his credit it must be remarked that in this letter there is not a single harsh word against Ben Meir, the originator of all the trouble.

The repeated notes of warning did not bring about the desired result. Most of the Palestinian and some of the Babylonian communities actually celebrated that Passover, and consequently the other festivals, two days earlier than the official date.[178] The schism must have assumed alarming proportions. Even a non-Jewish historian of the following century considered it important enough to include it in his account of historical events.[179] Twice more, so far as our

[176] So Ben Meir *apud* Bornstein, p. 92: והזכרתם כי רבו השמועות בגלל אחינו ישראל והאיגרות באות אליכם מכל צד.

[177] The letter was published first by Neubauer, *JQR.*, IX (1897), 37; Harkavy *Ha-Go-ren*, II (1900), 98; Epstein (with French translation and notes), *RÉJ.*, XLII (1901), 200; Bornstein, p. 69; comp. below, p. 413, no. 5.

[178] Comp. Bornstein, pp. 12, 90, n. 1; Epstein, *RÉJ.*, XLII, 179, n. 1, on the testimony of the Ḳaraite Sahl b. Maẓliaḥ *apud* Pinsker, *Likḳūṭē*, II, 36.

[179] Elijah of Nisibis (11th century) in Baethgen's *Fragmente syrischer und arabischer Historiker*, Leipzig, 1884, pp. 84, 141. Cyrus Adler in an article "Jewish History in Arabian Historians," *JQR.*, II (1890), 106, first called attention to the passage in the work of Elijah relating to the differences between the Babylonian and Palestinian Jews in the appointment of the festivals in the year 922. At

records give us information, the Babylonian representatives of Judaism expostulated with Ben Meir.[180] This happened in the ensuing summer. Again letters of warning and exhortation were sent to the "divided house of Israel," but to no effect. "The two parties indulged in mutual recriminations and excommunications, and even went so far as to charge one another with fraud and deception."[181] How long the quarrel lasted, and by what means it was brought to an end, cannot be learned from the scanty material that was discovered in the Genizah. From the report of the Syrian historian and from Ḳaraitic sources we know only that at the beginning of the year 4683 the quarrel was still in progress. *Rosh ha-Shanah* of that year was observed by the two opposing parties on different days in accordance with their divergent views.

We know, however, that Ben Meir and his supporters ultimately met with crushing defeat, and as may be plainly seen from Ben Meir's epistles, he attributed his downfall particularly to the activity of Saadia.[182] Ben Meir's judgment was doubtless right on this point. Neither the Geonim who presided over the two academies, nor any of the scholars among their followers had either the intellectual capacity

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that time, however (1890), nothing was known about the controversy of Saadia and Ben Meir and the real importance of the passage could not even be guessed at. Several years later, when the various Genizah fragments were brought to light by Schechter and others, Poznański, referring to Adler's article, pointed out the full meaning of Elijah's report in its bearing on the subject under consideration; see his article in *JQR.*, X (1898), 152-161, and comp. Bornstein, pp. 7 f.

[180] That the Geonim wrote three times to Ben Meir is repeatedly stated by Saadia in the fragment of the *Sefer ha-Mō'adim,* Bornstein, p. 61, line 17; 63, line 3; comp. Epstein, *Ha-Goren,* V, 138.

[181] Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 154, based on the testimony of the Ḳaraite Sahl b. Maẓliaḥ; see the references given above, note 178, and Bornstein, pp. 7, 61, n. 5.

[182] Comp. Bornstein, p. 13, n. 3, particularly Ben Meir's letters *apud* Bornstein, pp. 56, 90.

or the complete command over the people to parry the determined onslaught of Ben Meir, whose influence reached far beyond the boundaries of his own country and whose contention was not without merit. In fact, it was partly because of the weakened standing of the Gaonate that Ben Meir could venture to assert his authority above that of Babylonia. But Saadia's fiery genius, his profound learning, and above all his superior literary skill proved more than a match for his opponent and finally brought about Ben Meir's overthrow.

It is characteristic of the situation, that, as Saadia himself tells us, the Babylonian authorities, having failed in all their efforts against the disturber, had thought of calling the government to their assistance.[183] For some reason not stated they gave up the plan and decided upon issuing a memorial-volume (*Sefer ha-Zikkaron*),[184] in which all the misdeeds of Ben Meir from the beginning of the controversy to its end, his errors in calculation, the proceedings of the Gaonate against him, and particularly the reasons for their continued upholding of the accepted calendar, were to be minutely recorded. The volume was to be spread broadcast among all the Jews of the Diaspora, with the

[183] This results from a passage in Saadia's *Sefer ha-Mō'adim*, Bornstein, p. 65: ולא התעשתו לקחת אגרות מאת המלך להסירו, which means that they did not make up their mind to invoke the government, at the same time suggesting that the appeal was considered. This does not contradict the passage in Bornstein, p. 92, bottom (better given in the *JQR., N. S.*, vol. V (1914-1915), p. 555, top), where Ben Meir reports that he was twice imprisoned and tortured (comp. Schechter, *Saadyana*, p. 22, n. 1), for there Ben Meir has reference to some previous entanglement with the Ḳaraites, who denounced him to the government for some unknown reason and procured his punishment. Comp. Bornstein, p. 93, n. 2.

[184] This *Sefer Zikkarōn* is not identical with the *Sefer ha-Mō'adim*, as has been hitherto assumed, but is a separate work, which was written by Saadia at the request of the Exilarch and the Geonim for recitation in public. As I have shown elsewhere (see *Appendix*, No. 9) the lengthy fragment in Schechter's *Saadyana*, pp. 128-130 (Bornstein, pp. 99-102) is a remnant of this work.

special injunction, that it be read annually in public on the twentieth of *'Elūl,* before the approach of the high Holy Days, and thus serve as a warning against possible upheavals of a similar nature in all future generations. It was again Saadia who was charged with the composition of this important document. He wrote the book in the summer of 4682 (922), while the struggle was at its height. It was read publicly, as provided, in the month of *'Elūl* of the same year. Its effect on the communities was very great, apparently putting an end to the agitation, which had lasted for nearly two years. At all events, nothing more is heard of Ben Meir during the following years, though his main intention was to change the date of *Rosh ha-Shanah* of the year 4684 (923).[185]

How important a part Saadia had in the regulation of the present calendar can be seen also from the fact that eminent authorities of later centuries[186] describe him as the father and founder of the science of the calendar. Most, if not all, of his work in this field was done in connection with the controversy with Ben Meir or his polemics with the Ḳaraites. Its contemporary importance may be judged from the fact that it paved the way to Saadia's election to the Gaonate;[187] but the lasting moment of Saadia for the Jewish world and his influence on the development of mediæval Jewish literature have a better basis than his discomfiture of Ben Meir. Considering the acrimony—almost ferocity—with which the quarrel over the calendar was carried

[185] It must be borne in mind, however, that in all probability there were more documents relating to the quarrel, which have not yet come to light. Numerous fragments from the Genizah which are preserved in various public or private libraries, are still awaiting examination and publication. We may therefore expect that the continued search among the treasured documents will bring to light additional details bearing upon the various phases of the controversy and its final outcome.

[186] So the Tōsafist Jacob Tam (12th century); see for further details Bornstein, p. 25; below, note 625.

[187] See above, pp. 63-65.

on by both controversialists,[188] especially in the last stages of the argument, one cannot but designate it as a deplorable episode.

[188] Ben Meir's letters abound in personal denunciations and abuses of Saadia, which reveal the extreme bitterness of the writer; comp. *e. g.* the passage Bornstein, p. 56: סעיר בן אלפיומי וחבריו הזידונים המצרים והמינים, כרגע יאבדו ויזרו בארבע פינים. Not satisfied with the attacks on the character of his opponent, Ben Meir tried to defame also Saadia's family, asserting, as he says, "on good authority" that the latter's father was a Muezzin in the service of the Muhammedans, defiled himself by eating abominations, until he was driven out of Egypt and died in Jaffa (בן פיומי הדלאצי אשר נתברר לפנינו בעדים ברורים וכשרים . . . . שהיה אביו מכה בפטיש בארץ מצרים לעבודה זרה ואכל מרק פיגולים ונדחף מארץ מצרים ומת ביפו; Bornstein, p. 90); comp. above, pp. 27, 63. Saadia retaliates by adorning Ben Meir with the epithets המחשיך, "the obscurantist," and הממאיר, "the accursed one," both in satiric allusion to the name מאיר; comp. Bornstein, pp. 58, n. 1; 62, n. 1. Ben Meir's sons he terms "calves" (עגלים); see above, note 175.

Chapter V

SAADIA'S APPOINTMENT TO THE GAONATE (4688=928)

In the course of the inquiry into Saadia's career, the Ben Meir controversy appears to the investigator like an islet emerging suddenly from a vast void, only to be swallowed up again almost as soon as he sets foot upon it. Even the information about Saadia's early departure from Egypt has come to us from one of the documents bearing on that controversy;[189] while for the period of the years between his emigration to the Holy Land and his appearance on the scene with Ben Meir (921), one searches in vain for data regarding the life and activity of the future Gaon. During the two years the quarrel appears to have lasted he is seen in the foreground of all affairs, but as soon as the controversy abates, he is lost to sight for another period of six years (922-28), at the expiration of which he is called to the Gaonate. The only trace of his existence during that period is a passage from one of his works, quoted by a later author,[190] in which Saadia refers to the year 926 as the time of his writing.

We must therefore abandon for the present all speculation as to events and happenings in the life of Saadia during the few years preceding his installation in the office of Gaon. Some of the unexplored and unidentified remnants of manuscripts from the Genizah which are treasured in various public and private libraries, possibly contain data to fill the gaps: but until such material turns up, we

[189] See note 88 [and *Postscript*].

[190] Abraham b. Ḥiyya, astronomer and mathematician of the 12th century, in his *Sefer ha-'Ibbūr,* London, 1851, p. 96; comp. Rapoport's *Biography* of *Saadia* in the Hebrew periodical בכורי העתים, 1828, p. 26, end of note 1; Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 245; Graetz, *Geschichte,* V, *Note* 20, no. 6; above, note 126.

are entitled to the assumption that nothing of importance happened during these blank years to change the general aspect of his personality. Saadia the scholar spent most of his time in seclusion, studying and writing. Particularly in the period before us, when he had been made a regular member of the official staff of the Sura academy, he doubtless devoted his life entirely to the elaboration and completion of his numerous works. Years of study and research behind closed doors are not commonly fraught with personal events of such general interest as to induce contemporary chroniclers to record them for the benefit of future generations. As for the petty idiosyncrasies of a Jewish scholar or the trivial incidents of his daily life, there was no Boswell at hand to delight in watching and noting them. We may pass over the interval between the Ben Meir episode and Saadia's election to the Gaonate with the assurance that it hides no phase of biographical importance.

The period now to be taken up is the only one in Saadia's life, the details of which were known to the student of Jewish literature before the discovery of the Genizah. Such details may be derived partly from the works of Saadia himself, partly from those of contemporaneous authors or from well-authenticated later sources. Hence this period has been more or less minutely treated in works on Jewish history in general or on Saadia in particular. It was practically all that constituted the biography of the Gaon. But even this part of Saadia's life has been inadequately described. In the few existing monographs[191] on the Gaon, one regularly

[191] Separate biographies or occasional descriptions of Saadia's life were written by the following authors (in chronological order):

Rapoport, תולדות רבנו סעדיה גאון וקורות ספריו, in בכורי העתים, IX (1828), 20-37 (comp. *ib.*, X, 37 f., XI 83 f.), the classic source of all subsequent writers on Saadia. The biographical sketch, without the notes, was translated into German by Joseph Zedner and published in Ludwig Stern's *Jüdische Geschichte in Lebensbildern,* Stuttgart, 1862, pp. 136-138.

S. Munk, *Notice sur R. Saadia Gaon,* Paris, 1838.

E. Carmoly, in his *Revue Orientale* (Brussels 1841-1846), II, 33-46.

L. Dukes, *Beiträge,* II (1844), 5 ff.

finds the few important events of his later life—his election to the Gaonate, his subsequent quarrel with the Exilarch, his deposition, and his final rehabilitation—put together in a few lines; while the rest of the work is devoted to the pres-

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A. Geiger, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift,* V (1844), 281-316.

Steinschneider, *CB., coll.* 2156 ff., and later in *Arab. Liter.* (Frankfurt a/M., 1902), pp. 49-69; comp. Kaufmann's *Gedenkbuch,* pp. 144-168.

Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden,* V, fourth edition by S. Eppenstein, Leipzig, 1909, pp. 282-315; 523-533; Hebrew translation by S. P. Rabinowitz, III (Warsaw, 1893), pp. 279-308; 465-473; English translation, III (Philadelphia, 1894), pp. 187-202.

M. Joel, in Wertheim's *Jahrbuch für Israeliten,* 1865, pp. 1-17.

S. J. Fünn לתולדות רס"ג, in הכרמל, 1871, pp. 61-68.

G. Tal, *R. Saadjah Gaon,* in "*Lesingen gehouden in de Vereeniging voor Joodsche Letterkunde en Geschiedenis,*" Hague, 1887.

I. H. Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו, IV (1887), 4th edition, Wilna, 1904, pp. 123-143.

A. Harkavy, *R. Saadia Gaon, istorico-literaturnoe chtenie, Voskhod,* 1887, pp. 82-104 (the same appeared also in Hebrew under the title רב וחכים by H. Mirsky, in the periodical כנסת ישראל, III, Warsaw, 1888, pp. 55-71); comp. also Harkavy, in *Zapisky . . . . Ruskavo Arkheologicheskavo Obshchestwa,* V (1891), 179-210; VI, 340.

S. A. Taubeles, *Saadia Gaon,* Halle a/S., 1888 (a compilation without value).

D. Kohn (Kahana), ספר לתולדות ר"ס גאון, Cracow, 1892 (reprint from אוצר הספרות, IV, 292-328).

S. Bernfeld, רבנו סעדיה גאון, Cracow, 1892 (reprint from אוצר הספרות, IV, 329-346; 698-—, as a biography worthless).

M. Friedländer, *Life and Works of Saadia,* in *JQR.,* V (1893), 177-199.

G[regory] H[enkel], *R. Saadia Gaon, Opit Characteristiki evo Proizvedenii, Voskhod,* 1893, IV, 12-25; V, 104-119; VIII, 121-138; IX, 42-61; 1894, I, 118-143; II, 130-146; III, 136-146; VI, 119-132; VIII, 112-126; XI, 7-32; XII, 131-138.

W. Engelkemper, *De Saadiae Gaonis vita* etc., Münster, 1897, a learned dissertation.

S. Eppenstein, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Literatur im geonäischen Zeitalter* (reprint from *MGWJ.,* 1908-1913), pp. 65-148; 215-218.

A brief account of Saadia's life and works is given by Bacher in the *JE.,* X, 579-586; and lately by H. Malter in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, s. v. Se'adiah* (vol. XI); see also the present

entation of his teachings. No attempt is made to interpret these events in the light of contemporary history. We shall therefore not be bound by any of the existing presentations, but will dispose of the material from the old sources[192] in the way that seems best adapted to the plan and purpose of the present work. In accordance therewith it appears advisable to prepare the reader for a fuller understanding of the essential points in the development of the last and the most significant epoch of Saadia's life, by a brief account of the two important institutions of mediæval Babylonian Jewry—the Exilarchate and the Gaonate—and of their relations to one another.

The origin of the Exilarchate, which, according to the historical sources maintained its place in Babylon for over eight centuries, is not fully known. An old tradition claims

writer's article *Philosophy, ibidem,* vol. IX, pp. 873-877) ; comp. also A. Kaminka in Winter and Wünsche's *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II, 28-31 ; ד "ר א. גינזבורגם אידישע דענקער און פאעטען אין מיטעלאלטער New York, 1918, pp. 21-33. Finally, biographical accounts of Saadia are to be found with more or less detail in the introductions to the numerous editions of Saadia's writings, mostly repeating the older authorities, as Rapoport, Munk, Geiger, Graetz, and Steinschneider. See the detailed *Bibliography* in the present work, especially sections I, V.—An article on "The Time of Saadya" by S. Koch (Hebrew Union College Journal, vol. VI, Cincinnati, 1902, pp. 168-174) may here be recorded for bibliographers.

[192] These are in the main the *Report* of Nathan ha-Babli, a contemporary of Saadia, ed. Neubauer, *Mediæval Jewish Chronicles,* II, 77-88; the *Epistle of Sherira Gaon,* ed. Neubauer, *ib.,* I, 39 f. Abraham b. David's account in his סדר הקבלה (Neubauer, *ib.,* I, 65 f.), which conflicts in many essential points with the reports of Nathan and Sherira, is disregarded as less reliable. Later authors, as Menahem Meiri (Neubauer, II, 224), Isaac Lattes (*ib.,* p. 233) and Saadia Ibn Danan, חמדה גנוזה, ed. Edelmann, Königsberg, 1856, p. 28, merely repeat the unfounded statements of Abraham b. David, though for some points they may have had also other sources. For Nathan and the historicity of his Report see Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 22-36; comp. Marx. *ZfhB.,* XIII, 169, and Poznański, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 400 f. In the following the *Report* will be referred to only by the word "Nathan," and the pages are those of Neubauer's edition. The same edition is used also for the Letter of Sherira.

no less a personage than King Jehoiachin as the first Babylonian Exilarch (597 b. c. e.). This tradition is based on II Kings, 24-25, where it is told that Jehoiachin was brought captive to Babylon and imprisoned, but later freed by King Evil-merodach and given a place of honor. "The craftsmen and the smiths," who were taken into captivity together with the King (II Kings, 24. 16) are interpreted homiletically to be the King's retinue of scholars and prophets.[193] A chronicler of the eighth century,[194] the first to mention the captive Judæan King as the founder of the Exilarchate, in an effort to establish a continuous chain of Exilarchs of Davidic descent,[195] makes up a list of such dig-

[193] *Sifre,* section האזינו, § 321, and *Seder 'Olam,* ch. 25, which are the source of the Talmudim and Midrashim; see the references given by Ratner in his edition of the *Seder 'Olam, ad locum.* These sources do not designate King Jehoiachin as the first Exilarch. He receives this title only in the works of a later period in which, however, the authors gave expression to ideas only that were current among the people long before; see the next note.

[194] I refer to the anonymous author of the סדר עולם זוטא. This dry chronicle, covering only a few pages (in Neubauer's *MJC.,* II, 68-73), exists in various recensions and editions, also in Latin translations, and with commentaries. For the literature see Steinschneider, *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden,* § 9, and additions on p. 173. The most important and minute study on the subject is the one by Felix Lazarus, *Die Häupter der Vertriebenen,* in Brüll's *Jahrbücher,* etc., X (the entire volume), also separately, Frankfurt a/M., 1890. In the following I shall refer to this study by quoting only the name of the author; comp. also Abr. Krochmal, פרושים והארות לתלמוד בבלי, Lemberg, 1881, pp. 1-73 (Steinschneider, *H. B.,* XXI, p. 122). The chronicler does not state explicitly that Jehoiachin was Exilarch, though this is obviously his view, but in a fragmentary version of the same Chronicle, in Neubauer's *MJC.,* I, 195, it is said of the king: והוליכו בגלות והמליכו על ישראל; comp. Lazarus, *ib.,* pp. 19, n. 4; 55, n. 1; 158, n. 1. Among other ancient authors who follow this tradition may be mentioned the Gaon Ẓemaḥ b. Ḥayyim of Sura (882) in his Letter concerning Eldad. (See Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch,* II, 113); Sherira, p. 26; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 5. Ebjatar in Schechter's *Saadyana,* p. 87, line 27; p. 89, line 27, has reference to the same idea, but in a derogatory sense, pointing to the wicked ancestors of the Exilarchs, among them Jehoiachin.

[195] Zunz, *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge* (1892), p. 142; Steinschneider, *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden,* § 9; comp. Lazarus, pp. 19, 29 f.

nitaries reaching down to the year 520 c. e. The names of the earlier Exilarchs are all identical with those of the King's descendants enumerated in I Chron. 3. 17-24, all of whom according to the author lived and died in Babylon. The names of the Exilarchs of later generations are taken partly from the Talmud and partly from unknown sources. The historicity of this list, so far as the Biblical part is concerned, is beyond control. The latter part, however, beginning about the middle of the second century c. e., is authenticated by Talmudic and other evidence. Other lists of Exilarchs of still later periods, from 520 to 940, or even 1040, are preserved in various sources, more or less trustworthy.[196] Leaving aside those whose names are recorded in the Bible, and whose Exilarchal dignity may be legendary,[197] there are still at least thirty-three Exilarchs[198] accounted for historically by recent investigation.

The history of the Exilarchate is thus divided into two distinct periods; the first when Babylonia was under Persian rulers (the Arsacids and the Sassanids) and the second when it came under the Caliphate of the Arabs (651).

The exact circumstances under which the office came into existence are unknown. From the moment when the light of history falls upon the institution, it is evident that the Exilarch was the governor of Jewish Babylonia, appointed by the ruler of Persia and vested with full authority over his Jewish subjects.[199] As such he was responsible only to the king. His duties were to maintain order among the people under his jurisdiction and see to it that the taxes imposed upon the Jewish communities were collected and delivered into the imperial treasury. At certain festivities he had to

[196] See the various lists in Lazarus's work, pp. 171-173, 180.

[197] Comp. Lazarus, pp. 62 f.

[198] Beginning with a certain Nahum (about 140, c. e.), who is supposed to be identical with one Ahiah, or Neḥunyon, mentioned in the Talmud, and ending with David b. Zakkai (died 940), the opponent of Saadia. Comp. Lazarus, pp. 65 ff; Bacher, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, V, 288.

[199] Lazarus, p. 87, and in more detail, pp. 131 ff.

appear among the other dignitaries of the empire and participate in the court functions. In his dealings with the Jewish population he was entirely independent, often also overbearing and oppressive. In accordance with oriental custom, and being wealthy in his own right, he maintained his Exilarchal court with considerable pomp and circumstance, surrounding himself with a large retinue of servants and courtiers, who had to observe etiquette and official ceremonies similar to those practised at the Persian court. It was the prerogative of the Exilarch to appoint judges for the Jews from among the prominent scholars of the time, one of whom was the supreme judge. The latter had to reside at the Exilarch's court.[200]

Some of the Exilarchs, who were themselves learned in the religious law, are reported by the Talmud[201] to have acted as presidents of the judicial tribunal. On the whole, however, the Exilarch was not a representative of religious, that is to say, spiritual Judaism. His ambitions and aspirations were of a worldly and political nature. Such was the natural consequence of the fact that the office was hereditary in one family, which traced its pedigree to the house of David. Not only the Exilarchs themselves, but also the Jews in general looked upon their rule as a continuation of the old Judean kingdom.[202] Conscious of their dignity and power, the Exilarchs often placed themselves above the spiritual leaders of the people. Talmudic literature affords numerous

[200] Lazarus, pp. 143, n. 2; 148, n. 1; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, p. 11, n. 4.

[201] Shabbat, 55*a,* Mo'ed Ḳaṭan, 16*b,* Ḳiddushin, 44*b;* comp. Lazarus, p. 96, n. 5.

[202] The verse, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet" (Gen. 49, 10), was accordingly interpreted as referring to the Exilarchs and Patriarchs of Babylonia and Palestine; see Synhedrin, 5*a*; comp. Ginzberg, *l. c.,* p. 1. Bacher, however, properly remarks (*JE.,* V, 289), that the Baraita intends to cast a reflection on the Exilarchs. Sherira, p. 27, puts upon the Baraita the interpretation of the Talmud, that Babylon is more important than Palestine; comp. *Tōsāfōt ad locum;* Lazarus, p. 142.

instances of the ill-treatment of eminent scholars by Exilarchs, and especially by their unscrupulous officials.[203]

This attitude gradually created a certain antagonism to the ruling house among the people, notably among the learned men, which has found expression in various passages of the Talmud.[204] There is, however, no proof that the Exilarchs ever made themselves so objectionable as to arouse a general desire to see the office abolished. On the contrary, whatever dissatisfaction may have been felt at times, it was cheerfully suppressed in favor of this real or supposed Davidic dynasty, the only remnant of ancient glory. Thus, at a later period, under the dominion of the Arabs, when the privileges of the Exilarchs had been considerably curtailed, and their former independence in dealing with the Jewish population so reduced that the government would not recognize them unless they had been chosen by popular vote, the people remained loyal to the traditional house of David and regularly elected a member of the royal family.[205] Moreover, a few of the Exilarchs of Talmudic times endeared themselves by great learning, noble conduct, and just administration. Many legendary stories were later woven about their names, glorifying their memory.

Very little is known of the history of the individual Exilarchs under the Muhammedan rule, from 660, when a prince by the name of Bostanai was elected to the office, down to the time of Saadia. Several incidents that can be adduced from the scanty sources indicate, however, that the strained relations between the Exilarchs and the scholars of the academies,[206] which marked the Talmudic epoch, continued also during the second period of the Exilarchate.

[203] Giṭṭin, 14*b*, 67*b*; 'Abōdah Zarah, 38*b*; Shabbat, 58*a*, 121*b*; Yerushalmi Baba Batra, end of ch. 5; comp. also 'Erubin, 26*a*; Bacher, *JE.*, V, 291, bottom; Lazarus, p. 149.

[204] See Synhedrin, 38*a*; Shabbat, 54*b*, bottom; Lazarus, pp. 73, n. 6; 150, n. 1.

[205] Lazarus, pp. 131 ff.; 145.

[206] See the instances given below, p. 103.

When we reach the century of Saadia, the antagonism between the two forces assumes a definite form, tending toward mutual annihilation, until circumstances do practically put an end to the official existence of both.

If the Exilarchate may be looked upon as a shadowy representative of the Jewish body-politic after the destruction of the Jewish state, the Gaonate, as a spiritual organization, must be regarded as the informing and inspiring life-principle of that body. In the history of the Jewish people, perhaps more than in the history of other peoples, one may observe, without special effort, the existence side by side of two important factors, the political and the spiritual; but with the spiritual always in the foreground. Even during the time of Israel's political independence, the only period when the two tendencies might have manifested themselves equally, this aspect, one may unhesitatingly assert, was predominant.

The men in whose lives and activities the intellectual and spiritual aspirations of the nation find clear expression, have received from time to time different collective designations, in accordance with the accepted usages and customs of the respective ages. But whether they appear in history as Elders, Prophets, Men of the Great Synod, Tannaim, Amoraim, Saboraim, Geonim, or under the designations of intellectual leadership in later ages—and while their activities naturally differ in scope and compass with the varying conditions of the times—their inspiration and their message are intrinsically the same throughout all the generations. Their endeavors serve the one great purpose of perpetuating the Torah and making Israel the worthy people of God. In the unbroken chain of great men who have worked successively and successfully for the realization of this high purpose, the Geonim are the links between the generations of the Talmud and the Middle Ages. Through them, the heritage of the Orient comes down to its successor, the Occident.

As is often the case with the great movements and institutions of a remote past, the beginnings of the Gaonate are but imperfectly known. Nor is even the original meaning of

the title Gaon established beyond doubt. We are here not concerned, however, with details; a few general points will suffice.

The Geonim merely continued the educational work, *mutatis mutandis,* of their predecessors, the Saboraim, who in turn succeeded the Amoraim, the creators of the Talmud.[207] The two Babylonian academies, over which they presided, were founded by two distinguished Amoraim, Rab and Samuel, as early as the first part of the third century. Their work differed from that of their forerunners, inasmuch as they did not feel themselves called upon to add to the content of the Talmud or to change its form. They confined themselves to its study, elucidation, and interpretation. Eventually they also issued legal and religious decisions in doubtful cases. Their function, thus, would hardly in itself have justified the assumption of the new designation (Gaon = Highness, Excellency). This title, then, whatever the reason for its selection may have been, was not intended, like the earlier class-names mentioned, to be descriptive of the scholarly activity and significance of its bearers. It must have attached itself to their names in their official capacity as the religious representatives of Babylonian Jewry, recognized as such by the government. Its adoption as a symbol of office must, therefore, coincide with the governmental recognition and endorsement of that office.

There are no definite data enabling us to determine when this recognition by the government took place. On general grounds, supported by an incidental reference by the Gaon

[207] The differences between the Geonim and Amoraim pointed out by Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 6, may readily be admitted, yet these differences are the natural result of changed times and conditions. The general aspect of the development of Jewish tradition and its representatives is not altered thereby. In its basic idea this view coincides with the doctrine of the uninterrupted continuity of Jewish tradition, which is emphasized by all Jewish writers. That the scholars of every generation are the successors of the prophets is often expressed also by Saadia; see *'Emūnōt,* ed. Slucki, p. 49, bottom; Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 158, n. 5; Steinschneider, *Alfârâbi,* 115, n. 49; comp. Dieterici, *Weltseele,* pp. 139, 175.

Sherira, the historian *par excellence* of the Geonim, it may be assumed with a high degree of certainty that it happened under the fourth caliph, 'Ali, the son-in-law of Muhammed. In the year 658 he granted religious autonomy to the academy of Sura,[208] freeing it from the jurisdiction of the Exilarchs, who prior to that time had meddled in its affairs. It is true that the same Sherira designates as Geonim all the scholars that presided over the two academies long before the rise of the Caliphate, beginning with the year 589. This does not prove, however, that these scholars were actually invested with the title in their own time. Nor is there any evidence to prove that the title Gaon had come into use in the earlier period. It is known that the continuity of presidents of the two Babylonian academies, Sura and Pumbedita, had been interrupted for several decades previous to the year 589. Owing to persecutions by some of the Persian rulers, both institutions had to close their doors.[209] The period of the Saboraim had thus been brought to an abrupt end. But with the accession of the humane Chosru II (589) settled conditions returned, and the academy of Pumbedita resumed its work at once; the academy of Sura following, so far as is known, twenty years later (609).[210]

Sherira obviously considers the period during which the academies were closed as marking the end of the old line of presidents, known under the title Saboraim, and the inauguration of a new line. The later line, beginning with the year 589 and extending to 658, had no distinguishing title, except the one that has always been used as a general designation, *Reshe Metibata,* Heads of the Academies. Sherira, therefore, not caring to make a distinction between the presidents of the academies under Persian rule and those

[208] Graetz, V, *Note* 13; English edition, III, 90 f.; comp. Ginzberg, *l. c.,* p. 53. That the Caliph gave special privileges to the academy of Sura may be disputed, but the fact remains that the spiritual leaders of the people chose Sura as the institution representing Babylonian Jewry as an autonomous religious body.

[209] Graetz (English), III, 4 f.; comp. Brüll, *Jahrbücher,* II, 50-53.

[210] Graetz, *l. c.,* pp. 9 f.

under the Caliphate, applied the title Gaon, very general in his days, to all the past presidents alike. For the same reason he also designates as Geonim all the presidents of the Pumbedita academy, although, as has been proved lately, they probably received that title only under the Caliphate of Al-Ma'mun (830).[211] He even applies the title, though not so consistently, to Amoraim who happened to be presidents of the academies—for example to R. Ḥisda (died 309) and R. 'Ashi (died 427).[212]

It is therefore unnecessary either to continue the period of the Saboraim into the seventh century, or to reach back for the origin of the title Gaon into the time of Persian rule. The truth is that the Saboraic period ended in the middle of the sixth century. Then followed a gap of about forty years of total inactivity. When the work of the two schools was finally resumed, their rectors had no specific titles differentiating them as a class, until the second half of the seventh century, when the Muhammedan rulers granted to the spiritual leaders of Judaism full religious authority with definite rights and compensation. But even then only the heads of the more renowned academy of Sura assumed the title "Excellency" (Gaon). Those of the sister academy in Pumbedita remained what they had been theretofore, rectors of their institution, without special titles[213] or privileges. In all official matters they had to submit to the jurisdiction of the Exilarchs, whilst in religious questions they depended upon the decisions of Sura. This state of affairs continued until the year 830, when, under the new regulations of Al-Ma'mun, they were put on an equal footing with the Geonim in Sura, which meant, likewise, their liberation from the in-

[211] Graetz, V, *Note* 12, no. 6; English edition, III, 155, 177; Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 54.

[212] Comp. Brüll, Jahrbücher, II, 50, n. 72.

[213] Poznański (*JQR., N. S.*, vol. III (1912-1913), p. 402), however, thinks that the Pumbeditan rectors too may have assumed the title Gaon, though they were not recognized as Geonim by the authorities of Sura.

terference of the Exilarchs in their internal affairs.[214] Morally,[215] however, they did not gain the standing and recognition enjoyed by the chiefs of Sura, except perhaps for occasional short periods, when one or another among them happened to excel his rival in Sura through extraordinary learning or other personal qualities.

To this brief summary of the main points in the external history of the Geonim it remains but to add a few observations concerning the relations between the spiritual heads of Jewry and their political counterparts, the Exilarchs. It was noted before that a more or less outspoken antagonism between the Exilarchs and the leading scholars had existed as far back as Talmudic times. So long as the spiritual representatives of Talmudic Judaism were not organized into a regular religious body, with a well-defined religious policy, the antagonism of some of the worldly, often religiously lax, Princes of the Exile could express itself only sporadically and individually. With the growing importance of the academies, however, when their influence over all classes of the Jewish population, especially the humble pious masses, had become a factor to be reckoned with, the Princes, always jealously safeguarding their dignity and prestige, could not avoid misgivings that eventually led to open, inimical action.

The bad feeling between the two forces could only have been aggravated, when, under the leadership of a strong president, as, for example, R. Ashi, the academies suc-

[214] Nevertheless even after this time quarrels between the Exilarchs and the Pumbedita academy occurred quite often, due, as we shall see later, to the strained relations that existed between the two houses. The power of the Exilarchs, however, was gone, and at a later period we even find that the Geonim deposed unpleasant Exilarchs.

[215] Financially, too, there was a great distinction made between the two academies, Sura receiving two-thirds of certain revenues, while Pumbedita received one-third. This unequal distribution of the income was changed only by the Gaon Kohen Zedek in 926, when it was decided that both institutions should divide equally; see below, pp. 106 f.; Graetz (English), III, 93 f.

ceeded in lessening the authority of the Exilarchate and abolishing some of its former rights and prerogatives.[216] Of the relation existing between the two sides during the short Saboraic period nothing is known. In the turbulent times of the sixth century, when persecution followed persecution, there was hardly any spirit left in Babylonian Jewry for the adjustment of internal differences. The academies had finally to suspend their work, and the Exilarchate existed only nominally, if at all.[217] When under the last Sassanid kings, at the beginning of the seventh century, more favorable conditions for the Jews set in, and the academies resumed their activity under the presidency of the so-called earlier Geonim, the bickerings between them and the Exilarchs must have assumed a grave character.[218] There are no details relating to the inner history of the institutions under these Geonim. However, one statement of Sherira, the only contemporary historian of the Geonic period, regarding the conditions then prevailing, speaks volumes. Having discussed the succession of the Pumbedita Geonim of that early period, he declares: "The succession of the Geonim at Sura in those earlier years (up to 689) is not quite clear to me, owing to the disorders and revolutions caused by the Exilarchs, who deposed Geonim and installed them again." [219]

It should not be thought, however, that the Geonim of his own academy, at Pumbedita, fared any better, though he appears to be better informed on their early history. A glance at the report of Sherira proves, to the contrary, that the Pumbedita institution was subject to the same ill-treat-

[216] Comp. Lazarus, pp. 104, 111-113.

[217] Lazarus, p. 128.

[218] Of the conditions prevailing during that period Sherira, p. 33, has the following to say: "Under the Persian regime and at the beginning of Muhammedan rule the Exilarchs wielded tyrannical power and exercised great authority, for they bought the Exilarchate with large sums of money. There were some among them who harrassed the scholars and oppressed them greatly;" comp. Lazarus, p. 140.

[219] Neubauer, *MJC.*, I, 136; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 15.

ment by the Exilarchs, and for a much longer period than the one at Sura. As before noted, Sura had succeeded in obtaining perfect religious autonomy as early as the year 658,[220] so that henceforth nothing is heard of any Exilarchal interference with its management, while Pumbedita remained under the jurisdiction of the Exilarchs for nearly two centuries longer. During that long period depositions of Geonim, who for one reason or another had incurred the displeasure of the Princes, and installations of others, who proved subservient to their purposes, were of frequent occurrence. In 719, to quote only one instance, the Gaon Naṭronai I, a close relative of the Exilarch, wielded his power so tyranically that the scholars of his institution fled to Sura, where they remained until after his death.[221] To show the nature of Exilarchal interference with the academy it is also interesting to note that in 828, when two Princes laid claim to the Exilarchate, each of the pretenders appointed his Gaon, so that for a time Pumbedita was blessed with two Geonim.[222] Friction of one kind or another must have occurred even after the rescript of Al-Ma'mun (830), when Pumbedita too became independent, though for a long interval no case is actually recorded. About the year 920, shortly before the time of Saadia's appointment at Sura, we hear again of a violent feud of five years' standing between the Exilarch 'Uḳba and the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ,[223] or according to the account of Sherira, between the Exilarch David b. Zakkai and the

[220] This date does not necessarily conflict with the statement of Sherira, that there were troubles and disorders prior to 689. For the words ואית בהון תפוכאתא וטריאתא need not be taken so literally as to cover also the last three decades (658-689). The men were not always at war, and there were also times of peace. Moreover, it may have taken some time before the Exilarchs got used to the new order of things, and during that time friction may have occurred, though no record thereof has come to us.

[221] Sherira, 35; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 16.

[222] Sherira, p. 38, top; comp. Ginzberg, *l. c.*, p. 21; Graetz (English), III, 155 f.

[223] Nathan ha-Babli, p. 79.

Gaon Mubashshir of Pumbedita and his supporters.[224] There are indications that even at Sura things were not always very quiet, though the Exilarchs may not have dared to use the same tactics as in Pumbedita. The fact that Sherira does not record any instance of Exilarchal meddling with the affairs of that academy, does not prove its total absence. Sherira, as is well known, was particularly interested in relating the history of his own academy (Pumbedita) and shows no intention of describing in detail the events at Sura. It is hardly probable that the quarrel between the above-mentioned Exilarch David b. Zakkai and Saadia, which we are now about to discuss, was the first in the long history of the Sura academy since its emancipation in the seventh century. Similar conflicts must have arisen at previous times. They may not have been followed by such grave consequences as in the case in question, and were therefore passed by without special notice. Be that as it may, the history of the Exilarchs and the Geonim shows sufficiently that from the very beginning to the very end of their dual existence conflicting ideas and interests were at play, which filled both parties with mutual distrust and suspicion and often moved them to acts of open warfare. If we bear these facts in mind, the bitterness with which the war was finally waged between those whom we may call

[224] Sherira, p. 40. Various attempts have been made at explaining and reconciling the widely divergent reports on this dispute by the two authors, Nathan and Sherira; see the discussion of the subject in Graetz' *Geschichte*, V, *Note* 12, no. 7, and more recently Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 55-66; comp. Marx, *ZfhB.*, XIII (1909), pp. 169 f.; Poznański, *JQR.*, 1913, pp. 401 f. This much disputed problem does not concern us here. To my mind a reconciliation between the two contradicting sources is not possible, and credence should be given to Nathan as against Sherira. Nathan writes like an historian describing events with much detail. His account is thus supported by internal evidence. Sherira, on the other hand, chronicles names and dry facts, for which he is often the only source, thus escaping our further control. Finally, Nathan is eye-witness of most of the events he relates, Sherira relies on other chroniclers or tradition. In the subsequent pages we therefore follow Nathan's account.

the last Exilarch on the one side and the last Gaon of Sura [225] on the other, will appear almost as the natural outcome of an age-old feud between two families struggling for supremacy. In this case particularly, however, personal differences seem to have given the first impetus to the opening of hostilities.

Before discussing this matter, however, we must consider the conditions that prevailed in the Sura academy shortly before the election of Saadia to the Gaonate and the immediate causes that led to that election.

In the life of an institution as in the life of an individual, there is a period of growth and development, a period of persistent strength and vigor, and naturally also the period of gradual falling off and final dissolution. The Geonic institution at Sura, not to speak of its sister at Pumbedita, which had a somewhat different career, manifested in a marked degree during the long stretch of its existence, all these signs of growth, vigor and decline. At the time with which we are here concerned, toward the end of the ninth century, it had long passed the culminating point of its vitality and was rapidly nearing its end. It had spent its vital energy and was about to die of exhaustion. It ceased to produce able men who could take charge of its affairs and keep it alive. The historian is wont to look for more immediate and definite causes to account for the decay of institutions, as a physician seeks for some special disease as the particular cause of death, although age and general decrepitude might be sufficient explanation. In the case of the Sura Gaonate it is not hard to find external causes to account for its decline. Sherira (p. 39) informs us that the Gaon R. Malka (about 887) died after an incumbency of only one month, and that during a period of three months at about the same time, an unusual mortality prevailed, carrying off

[225] About fifty years later, it is true, the Suran academy was reopened under the headship of Samuel b. Hophni (see below, note 281). His Gaonate however, is to be regarded as a detached relic of the past rather than a direct continuation thereof. The attempts to revive the Exilarchate were still less successful; see below, note 283.

most of the older scholars. No doubt their death was due to some epidemic disease. In the years that followed things went from bad to worse. The Geonim that succeeded one another for the next three decades, to judge from the little we know about them, were quite insignificant men. When the Gaon Shalom b. Mishael died (911), Sherira says "Conditions at Sura became extremely bad, and there were no scholars left." A certain R. Jacob b. Naṭronai was appointed to succeed Shalom, and when he too passed away, after an incumbency of thirteen years, the Exilarch David b. Zakkai, in order not to leave the chair vacant, saw himself compelled to "ordain" a certain Yom Ṭob Kahana, "although he was a weaver by trade." He occupied the chair for four years (924-928). Upon his death it was first contemplated to abolish the Gaonate of Sura altogether and to transplant the resident members to Pumbedita. After some deliberation, it was agreed to retain the Gaonate of Sura, at least nominally, by the appointment of a titular Gaon, who was to have his seat in Pumbedita. The choice fell upon an *'Allūf* of the Pumbedita academy named Nathan, an uncle of the Gaon Sherira. But the Gaon-elect died before he had a chance to assume his dignity. His death seems to have been taken as a sign of Providential disapproval of the intention to abolish the old academy of Sura. The plan was given up, although no acceptable candidate was at hand to fill the vacancy.[226]

This was in brief the situation at Sura in the year 928. It represents the nadir of a long downward movement, which in the last few decades had been hastened considerably by the newly strengthened position of the Pumbedita academy. In the measure in which Sura lost in power and prestige, the Pumbedita institution, by virtue of its more prominent Geonim, gained in ascendency, attracting a larger number of disciples. In 926 the able and energetic Gaon Kohen Ṣedeḳ even succeeded in diverting a part of the income of

[226] Sherira, p. 39; comp. Graetz (English), III, 192.

the academy of Sura to the treasury of the college of Pumbedita, thus putting an end also to the financial supremacy of Sura.[227]

These adverse conditions did not discourage the Exilarch David b. Zakkai from trying to invest some scholar with the honor of the Sura Gaonate. His first thought was to offer the position either to Saadia, or to one Ẓemaḥ b. Shâhîn, a man of noble parentage and of some learning. It seems, however, that neither of the two was entirely satisfactory to him. Saadia, although for some years an active member of the academy, was a foreigner by birth. Theretofore the Geonic dignity had been hereditary in a few families, some of whom even claimed Davidic descent.[228] To judge from several instances recorded in the sources, they were all interrelated, being in this respect, too, an exact parallel to the Exilarchs, with whom they were also often linked by intermarriage.[229] Hence the appointment of Saadia involved the breaking of all precedents. David b. Zakkai seems to have entertained a natural reluctance to go to this extreme.[230] But the other candidate, probably of Geonic origin, to which the phrase "noble parentage" seems to allude, did not possess the necessary qualities for the presidency of the academy.

[227] Neubauer, *MJC.*, II, 78; Graetz, *l. c.*, pp. 183 f. There are some doubts as to the authorship of the text preceding the report of Nathan ha-Babli, for which see Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 34 ff.; comp. Marx's review of Ginzberg's work in *ZfhB.*, XIII, 169, where this point is also touched upon.

[228] Sherira, p. 33, points out with pride that he was a descendant of an ancient Exilarchal family, which traced its pedigree to the house of David; comp. Abraham b. David, סדר הקבלה (Neubauer, *MJC.*, I, 66); Ginzberg, *l. c.*, pp. 9 f.; above, notes 18, 150.

[229] Sherira, p. 35, tells of the Gaon Naṭronai I (719), that he was related to the Exilarchal house; comp. Ginzberg, *l. c.*, p. 16.

[230] As we have seen above (note 18) Saadia claimed noble ancestry, tracing his origin to the Mishnaic teacher Ḥanina b. Dosa, or even as far back as Shelah, the son of Judah. He voiced this claim, however, at a much later period, when his enemies pointed with scorn to his supposed lowly origin; see Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 164, n. 10.

The Exilarch therefore decided to offer the position to R. Nissi Nahrawâni, a blind man, who was generally respected on account of his extreme piety. On a previous occasion he had played an important part in bringing about a reconciliation between the same David and his opponent, the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ of Pumbedita. Nahrawâni, however, declined the honor on the ground of his blindness. Asked to make some suggestion as to a possible candidate, he refused to express himself. The Exilarch then solicited his opinion regarding Saadia and Ẓemaḥ b. Shâhîn. R. Nissi at once advised the choice of Ẓemaḥ. He expressed the greatest admiration for Saadia's learning and character, but knowing Saadia's independent spirit and the dictatorial disposition of the Exilarch, he anticipated trouble between the two men. "It is true," R. Nissi explained, "that Saadia is a great man, of extraordinary learning; but he is absolutely fearless, and by reason of his great learning and wisdom, eloquence and piety, he does not consider anybody in the world." These words of praise and caution produced the opposite effect from that intended, for David now said: "I have decided and will appoint Saadia." To this R. Nissi replied: "Do as you have determined, I shall be the first one to sit at his feet and hearken to his words." Thereupon[231] Saadia

[231]Nathan, on whose report the foregoing presentation is based, has here: הנהיגהו אותה שעה בפני כהן צדק ובפני תלמידי ישיבת פומבדיתא ומינוהו להיות ראש ישיבת סורא. Neubauer (p. 80) reads הנהיגוהו, in the plural, probably because of the following ומינוהו, but as the Exilarch is not mentioned separately, it seems preferable to read הנהיגהו, the singular form thus referring to David, who introduced Saadia to the assembly. However, this is not of importance. More important are the words אותה שעה, which certainly mean "at once," or "immediately." Unless the words were overlooked, or Nathan disregarded as untrustworthy on this point, it is hard to see why all modern biographers of Saadia, prior to the discovery of the Genizah, should have assumed that he was living in Egypt at the time of his appointment as Gaon. We need not contend now against this erroneous view, which originated with Abraham b. David. Nathan's report points to a meeting of the Exilarch, the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ, and the leading members of both academies either in the house of the Exilarch, or in the academy of Sura,

was invited to appear before the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ and the other dignitaries of the Pumbedita academy, and was solemnly installed as Gaon of Sura. This event took place in the month of Iyyar, 928, Saadia being then thirty-six years old.[232]

Only too soon did the blind man's apprehension prove true. At first only slight friction occurred, without immediately serious consequences.[233] But two years after Saadia's installation a fierce struggle broke out between the Gaon and the Exilarch, which, in the bitterness manifested by both parties, as well as in its far-reaching consequences for Babylonian Jewry, surpassed all similar quarrels known in the long history of the Geonim.

The immediate cause of the rupture—a litigation by heirs to a fortune, which the Exilarch decided so as to bring great gain to himself—was important enough to explain Saadia's opposition. Nevertheless, judging from what we know about the administration of the Exilarchs in general and that of David b. Zakkai in particular, we may take it for granted that the incident in question was not the only one of its kind to come to the notice of Saadia. It must have been part of an established system of administrative abuses and perversions of justice, which a man of Saadia's integrity and love of right could not possibly countenance.

The special case which the Gaon probably regarded as a capsheaf of iniquity, is characteristic of the conditions prevailing. The decision of the Exilarch in the lawsuit before his court, would have put one tenth of the disputed amount into his own coffers. To give legal authority to his decree the Exilarch had to obtain the signatures of the two Geonim.

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for which a Gaon was to be chosen. As soon as the choice fell upon Saadia, he was called in and formally presented by the Exilarch to the assembled board and the scholars of the Pumbedita academy. To the scholars of Sura he needed no introduction, as he had been a member of that academy for about six years prior to his appointment.

[232] Sherira, p. 40, top [but see *Postscript*].

[233] Comp. Graetz (English), III, 194.

He sent the documents first to Saadia. The latter, upon examining them, saw through the scheme and found it impossible to affix his signature. Wishing to avoid unpleasantness, he advised the litigants to secure first the signature of the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ of Pumbedita. He may have hoped that his senior would recognize the unfairness of the decree and would undertake to settle the matter in some acceptable way. But Kohen Ẓedeḳ was not so scrupulous as Saadia. He signed the documents without raising any objection, possibly without scrutiny. When the matter was brought back to Saadia, he at first tried to escape the difficulty by the statement that his signature was superfluous, since those of the Exilarch and of the other Gaon had been affixed. The litigants realized that this was only a pretext and repeatedly adjured him to tell them the real reason for his refusal. The truth could be hidden no longer. Saadia had to point out and to explain the points of illegality in the Exilarchal decision which made him withhold his assent. The parties concerned returned to the Exilarch and informed him of the situation. Aroused by the daring of the Gaon, the Exilarch sent his son Judah to Saadia with the command: "Go and tell him in my name that he shall at once endorse the documents." Judah carried the message, and Saadia received it with the words: "Tell your father that it is written in the Torah (Deuteronomy, 1, 17) 'Ye shall not respect persons in judgment.'" The Prince of the Captivity, infuriated by the answer, forgot all etiquette and through his son reiterated categorically: "Sign and don't be a fool!" The son, who was to deliver this order, thought it wiser to suppress it, so as not to widen the breach. Instead he implored the Gaon to yield, in order to avoid a rupture. But Saadia was not the man to surrender in a question that involved a religious principle. David b. Zakkai, incensed beyond measure, sent his son again and again to Saadia with abusive messages and threats, which were turned by the princely messenger into friendly appeals and expostulations. But all to no avail. Finally Judah, too, wearied of walking to and fro with his father's fruitless orders. When his last

effort at persuasion had failed, in a moment of exasperation, he raised his hand against the Gaon, threatening to strike him if he did not sign immediately. Hardly had the prince finished speaking, when he was seized by Saadia's attendants and thrust from the room. The doors were locked to prevent his re-entrance. Judah went home defeated, and, "with tears running from his eyes," reported to his father what had happened. Matters were now beyond repair. David b. Zakkai excommunicated the obstinate scholar and declared his office vacant. To the Gaonate he appointed a young and insignificant Rabbi, one Joseph b. Jacob, called also Bar-Saṭia.[234] Saadia, not in the least discouraged, retaliated in kind, excommunicating David b. Zakkai and declaring him to be no longer Exilarch. To the vacant throne he appointed Josiah Ḥasan, a brother, or, according to Sherira, a nephew of David b. Zakkai.[235]

At once two opposing factions were formed, the one siding with the Exilarch, the other with the Gaon. With Saadia were the richest people of Babylonia, the scholars of the academies,[236] and all the prominent men in the community of Bagdad, among them the wealthy and highly respected Naṭira family.[237] David b. Zakkai, on the other hand,

[234] This Joseph seems to have been a member of a Gaonic family, for he is described as גאון בן גאונים; see Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 227, n. 6, 229, n. 9, and p. 233, line 10.

[235] The above presentation is a free reproduction of Nathan's Report, p. 81.

[236] Nathan, p. 80, line 10 from below, says תלמידי הישיבות, in the plural, which suggests that even some of the scholars of the Pumbedita academy, whose Gaon sided with the Exilarch, sympathized with Saadia. See, however, below, note 239.

[237] Nothing whatever was known about this family prior to 1903, when a highly interesting manuscript from the Genizah, containing a sort of a family history of the house Naṭira, was published in Arabic, by Harkavy, in Berliner's *Festschrift*, pp. 34-43. The writer, a contemporary of Saadia, tells of a plot by a high official of the Caliph Al-Mu'taḍid (892-902) to exterminate the Jews, which was frustrated by a dream of the Caliph that led to the elevation of Naṭira. The latter, immensely wealthy and charitable, remained in his high position at the court of the Caliphs until his death (916),

was supported by his courtiers, as also by the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ, whose eagerness for the downfall of Saadia and the Sura academy appears to have been prompted by the desire that his own college might become the sole authority of Babylonian Jewry. He had, indeed, already disgraced his name and office by signing, or perhaps even assisting in the composition of the Exilarchal "Letter of Excommunication"[238] against Saadia. In the baseness of its tone and the vileness of its accusations this document has its equal only in the diatribe of Sarjâdah mentioned below.[238a] Prominent members of the Pumbedita academy[239] followed their chief's example, either because they had to do his bidding, or because they shared his feeling.

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when he was succeeded by his son Sahl, who, like another son, Isaac, followed the example of his noble father, caring lavishly for the poor and the needy, Jews and Muhammedans alike. It is these two brothers to whom Nathan ha-Babli refers as the בני נטירא (p. 80, line 6 from below). The father he had mentioned twice before (pp. 78, line 4 from below; 79, line 11; comp. p. 83, line 8). Harkavy, *l. c.*, p. 34, remarks that no mention of Naṭira is made anywhere else in Jewish literature, but a few years later the "Sons of Naṭira" appeared again in a fragmentary letter in Ginzberg's *Geonica,* II, 87; comp. I. Friedlaender, *JQR.,* XVII, 753, who suggests that the fragment on the Naṭira family published by Harkavy and the Report of Nathan ha-Babli are portions of one and the same book written by Nathan under the title אכבאר בגראד, "The History of Bagdad," which is not improbable; comp. p. 293.

[238] Published first by Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* X, 172 ff., then by Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 231-234. This was not the only missile David and Kohen Ẓedeḳ directed against Saadia, as the Ḳaraite epitomizer mentions there (p. 231, lines 21-23) other, more extensive, writings by the same authors.

[238a] See below, note 246*a*.

[239] Of these only one is known with some degree of certainty. In his ספר הגלוי (Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 167, line 15) Saadia mentions among his enemies one Hananiah, whose name he changes disparagingly into 'Ananiah=the *lamentable* one. As Harkavy, *l. c.,* p. 144, properly remarks, Saadia has reference to Sherira's father, Hananiah b. Judah, who later became Gaon of Pumbedita (938-43); comp. above, note 236, and below, p. 126.

The most violent and most influential opponent of Saadia was one Aaron b. Joseph Ibn Sarjâdah [240] of Bagdad, a merchant of great wealth and at the same time a scholar and writer of no small accomplishments, who at a later period succeeded in usurping the Gaonate of Pumbedita. This man hardly deserves the respect and consideration usually accorded to him by modern authors. He may have been a great scholar, as is attested by contemporary sources,[241] and he may also have possessed other good qualities—liberality, devotion to communal interests, and the like. But from all that is related of him in the same sources, he was also a man of violent, quarrelsome, and vindictive temper, and of an absolutely tyrannical bent of mind. There is no doubt that he had himself aspired to the Gaonate of Sura [242] prior to the appointment of Saadia, but his candidacy, it

[240] His first name in Arabic was Ḫalaf (כלף), for which Nathan regularly substitutes the Biblical Kaleb (כלב), while Sherira, Abraham b. David, and others have Aaron. Saadia (Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 167, line 14; *REJ.,* LXVIII, 9, top), playing on the name Kaleb, calls him כֶּלֶב. The meaning of the surname is unknown and even the writing uncertain. Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur,* § 34, adopts סרגאדה, which I follow in the transliteration; comp. Steinschneider, *JQR.,* XI, 126, no. 282; Harkavy's note in the Hebrew translation of Graetz's *Geschichte der Juden,* vol. III, p. 291; Graetz, *Geschichte,* V, 4th edition, p. 293, n. 4.

[241] See Steinschneider, *Arab. Literatur,* § 34. In a marginal note of a MS. of Maimonides's *Guide* (see below, pp. 133 f.), probably written by Maimonides himself, Sarjâdah is mentioned among the learned men who wrote against the doctrine of the eternity of matter. A passage from his Arabic commentary on the Pentateuch, section וזאת הברכה, is quoted by Joseph b. Judah, probably the pupil of Maimonides, known as Ibn 'Aknin (comp. Poznański, *JQR.,* XVII, 168 f.), in a fragment of a work on calendar, published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVI, 690-694. Other passages from the same commentary were published (from a MS. work of Tanḥum Jerushalmi, 13th century) by Harkavy, in his חדשים גם ישנים, X (Warsaw, 1896, reprint from the Hebrew edition of Graetz's History, V), 23. Sarjâdah is also the author of a commentary on the tractate *Yebamōt,* quoted by Ginzberg, *Geonica,* II, 67.

[242] Comp. Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* X, 172.

appears, was not even considered.[243] He is reported to have been a good dialectician. On any question submitted to him he was able to give more than one satisfactory answer. Nevertheless Saadia's extraordinary learning and brilliancy put him lamentably into the shade.[244] Morbidly vainglorious and ambitious, he bore a grudge against the generally admired scholar, which may have been enhanced by the latter's independent spirit and perhaps open disregard for his person. Thus, when the quarrel broke out between Saadia and David b. Zakkai he thought his opportunity had come to get even with his stronger rival, and he at once joined hands with the Exilarch.

The two parties arrayed themselves for the combat. Their first weapons, as we have seen, were mutual excommunications and depositions, and the appointment of substitutes to fill the two imaginary vacancies. That pens on both sides were kept busy writing recriminatory proclamations and circular letters goes without saying.[245] The battle of proclamations in the Ben Meir controversy was but an insignificant skirmish compared with the present struggle. A Ḳaraite of the time, who, like all of his sect naturally rejoiced in the trouble of their lifelong opponent, has done history the service of preserving extracts from a scandalous diatribe by Aaron Sarjâdah,[246] a sad example of the demoralized and demoralizing spirit that invaded the ranks of Saadia's opponents. The document is full of the coarsest invectives, and some of its accusations, repeated again and again, are so vile and impudent that one shrinks from reproducing them.[246a]

[243] As noted before, the Exilarch considered only Nahrawâni, Ẓemaḥ, and Saadia.

[244] Nathan, p. 80.

[245] See above, note 238.

[246] Published by Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* X, 173-178; Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 225 ff.

[246a] "In virulence and obscenity it exceeds anything of the sort I have ever seen—the manifesto of the Spaniards at the time of the Armada scarcely comes near it" (D. S. Margoliouth, *JQR.,* XII, 506).

We may take it for granted that in turn Saadia and his adherents did not spare their antagonists. They probably issued counterattacks no whit gentler, which subsequent generations have wisely allowed to fall into oblivion. But it is safe to assume that nothing similar to the defamatory libel of Sarjâdah ever issued from the pen of Saadia. We have one example of the manner in which Saadia defended himself during this quarrel, which fully bears out our assumption. In the Introduction to one of his works, called *Sefer ha-Galui* (*The Open Book*[247]) he replies to some of the charges brought against him by his enemies, such as David b. Zakkai, Aaron Sarjâdah, and others, whom he mentions by name. Aside from general derogatory epithets, like "wicked" and "ignorant," and rather childish plays[248] on the names of his opponents, which he tries to justify by citing similar literary diversions in the Bible, there is not one word of objectionable or abusive character. If we reflect that the work in question was written at a time when Saadia, having met with crushing defeat at the hands of his enemies, was compelled to live in retirement and seclusion, while the Exilarch's faction were rejoicing over his downfall, we can easily draw conclusions as to the difference in character and moral stamina between the two opposing parties.[249]

Violent and determined as the literary feud appears to have been, it did not produce the results desired by either side. Both Saadia and David b. Zakkai remained in their respective offices, supported and upheld by prominent and influential friends. In the course of time the situation became untenable, as the adherents of both sides often resorted

[247] This meaning of the title as well as the genuineness of the book and many other points relating thereto have been made the subject of long controversies; see for all details the *Bibliography*, below, section VI, pp. 387-394.

[248] See notes 239-240 and the references there given; Margoliouth, *JQR.*, XII, 527.

[249] For this point see the correct remarks of Harkavy (against Margoliouth), *JQR.*, XII, 533, 552 f.

to acts of violence.[250] Appeals were made to the government of the Caliph. According to the Exilarch's "Letter of Excommunication" it was Saadia who first invoked the assistance of the government, and secured the imprisonment of some of his assailants.[251] If this was the case, he is not to be blamed, for Aaron Sarjâdah, with characteristic brazenness, tells boastfully of severe blows and beatings administered to the Gaon by his opponents.[252] However that may have been, the reigning Caliph Al-Muḳtadir, a fair-minded and just ruler, did not show himself amenable to the wishes of the Exilarch and Sarjâdah, who tried to effect Saadia's forcible deposition and perhaps banishment. Sarjâdah offered ten thousand ducats[253] to the treasury of the Caliph for a decree favoring the Exilarch. The Caliph

[250] Riots, street-fighting, interference of the government, and imprisonment of the rioters are repeatedly mentioned in Sarjâda's *Chronique scandaleuse* and in the Exilarchal Letter of Excommunication; see Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 227, lines 4-5; 230, lines 14-18; 232, bottom. The contemporary Arabic historian al-Mas'ûdi (quoted above, note 20) likewise reports riots.

[251] Harkavy, *l. c.,* p. 232, bottom. This seemingly contradicts the Report of Nathan (above, p. 111); for according to that Report Saadia was excommunicated immediately after his refusal to sign the Exilarchal decree, and hence, prior to that excommunication, could have no time, and probably no cause, for appealing to the government and securing anybody's imprisonment. However, Nathan does not mention any formal Letter of Excommunication (כתב חרם) issued on the spot by the Exilarch. He merely states that the latter "excommunicated R. Saadia" (החרים), which no doubt refers to the Exilarch's general pronouncement against Saadia prior to the issuance of the official Letter of Excommunication. During the intervening time both parties may have resorted to acts of violence. Moreover, the Ḳaraite who reproduced the Letter of Excommunication, being inimical to Saadia, may have tampered with the text of the document, adding matter that would prejudice the reader against the Gaon; Harkavy, *l. c.,* pp. 222 f.

[252] Harkavy, *l. c.,* p. 230, lines 14 ff. Saadia himself tells of "attempted assassinations" by his enemies (Harkavy, *l. c.,* p. 155, line 11) and the same is related by Abraham b. David, Neubauer, I, 65; comp. Malter, *JOR., N. S.,* III (1912-1913), p. 498, line 5.

[253] So Graetz (English), III, 196, top; Nathan, p. 80, has ס' אלף זוז.

insisted that both sides be heard. He ordered a formal trial before the judges of his court under the presidency of the grand-vizir 'Alî b. 'Îsâ. For some reason the dispute was not settled one way or the other,[254] and Saadia maintained his authority as Gaon for about three years, in spite of all opposition and the rivalry of the counter-Gaon Joseph b. Jacob.

In October, 932, the Caliph Al-Muḳtadir was killed in a rebellion, and Al-Ḳâhir, an unprincipled and dissolute person, who besides was so poor that he had to borrow clothes for the ceremony of installation,[255] became his successor. The Exilarch and Sarjâdah saw the time opportune, and again resorted to bribery. This time they met with success. Al-Ḳâhir did not care a rap which of the two parties was right or wrong, only which gave the larger sum of money. Aside from the contributions of Sarjâdah and probably of other individuals, the large sums which David b. Zakkai, with the aid of the Caliph's officials, is reported to have extorted from various communities, were no doubt, to serve this noxious purpose.[256] The Exilarch and his followers thus came out victorious. Saadia was definitely deposed, probably not long after Al-Ḳâhir's succession to the throne.

[254] Mas'ûdi, *l. c.* (see above, notes 20, 250), only says that the parties were advised to settle their differences before the court, but does not state whether a settlement was reached or not. Instead he proceeds with the statement that Saadia maintained his authority over many of the Jews, and that they paid allegiance to him. It therefore appears that the decision of the court, if one was reached, was to the effect that each party should have the right to adhere to its respective chief without interference by the other. The passage in Mas'ûdi was misinterpreted by Graetz, *Geschichte,* V, *Note* 20, no. 9, and Engelkemper, *De Saadiae Gaonis Vita,* p. 12, n. 3.

[255] Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen,* II, 644; comp. *ibidem,* pp. 649, 654.

[256] Nathan, p. 86. He adds that in the face of this injustice none of the heads of the two academies felt it his duty to object to the procedure. This censure of the Geonim certainly does not include Saadia, nor does it refer to Saadia's predecessor, but to Joseph b. Jacob and Kohen Ẓedeḳ; comp. Graetz (English), III, 194.

That his enemies tried to secure his banishment, may be assumed. It is certain that they succeeded only in driving him from his office in Sura, and that for a time he lived as a private scholar in Bagdad.[257] Josiah-Ḥasan, the brother of David b. Zakkai, whom Saadia had appointed counter-Exilarch, was exiled to Ḫorâsân,[258] where he remained until his death. As late as the fourteenth century, several families claiming Exilarchic descent trace their pedigree to this Josiah.[259]

Al-Ḳâhir's reign lasted about a year and a half (November 1, 932-April 23, 934).[260] He was succeeded by the Caliph Al-Râḍi (934-940).[261] During the reign of the former and partly also under the administration of the latter, who, although a pious and just ruler, need not have been especially interested in the affairs of the Gaonate, Saadia was compelled to live in retirement. He had fought corruption within the ranks of his own people, but he could not fight a vicious Caliph and corrupt vizirs. However, though outwardly defeated, he was not broken in spirit. Saadia was not the man to stand or to fall with an office. He did not derive his greatness and worth from the Gaonate. On the contrary, it was the Gaonate that had received a further grant of life by being vested in a Saadia. Despite all the tribulations and anguish the prolonged struggle and its outcome must have caused him, he realized that his career as a teacher and uplifter of his people was not over, and he resolved to carry on with even more vigor and energy the task

[257] See Graetz, *Geschichte,* V, *Note* 20, no. 10. To the proofs adduced by Graetz may be added that from Nathan's description of Saadia's reconciliation with the Exilarch it also becomes obvious that prior to that reconciliation Saadia was living in Bagdad. Nathan relates that while the Exilarch was waiting in Bishr's house the latter betook himself to Saadia and brought him over to his house to meet the Exilarch. This proves that Saadia was within reach.

[258] Sherira, p. 40; comp. Harkavy in Frankel-Graetz's *Monatsschrift,* 1882, p. 167.

[259] Comp. Lazarus, p. 179, no. xiv.

[260] Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen,* pp. 644, 650.

[261] *Ibidem,* pp. 650, 677.

to which he had set himself. It was during these years of retirement and solitude, that he wrote his best and most original work, the "Book of Philosophic Doctrines and Religious Beliefs," which gave the world the first not alone, but a complete, philosophic system of the Jewish religion. Its contents and merits are discussed in a later chapter. But it may here be said in passing that even had Saadia written nothing else, this book would have been sufficient to entitle him to the first place among the great minds of mediæval Jewry. The freshness and originality with which it is written, prove that it was not the work of a recluse brooding in despair over a shattered career and seeking to drown his grief in literary occupation, but that of a great and highsouled thinker who, having gone through a trying experience, and having realized that from the very beginning it was a lost cause, dismisses the whole matter from his mind, and with serene superiority turns his attention to what was the real aim of his life, the elaboration of a system of Jewish thought. It is characteristic of Saadia's mental attitude while writing this work that he nowhere so much as alludes either to his former Gaonate or to any of its phases, although the long Introduction, in which he speaks of himself and his motives in the composition of the work, might have given him the opportunity to do so.[262]

In another work, it is true, in the so-called "Open Book," written a little later,[263] he takes occasion to describe his experiences in the Gaonate and the trials he had passed through. But even there, at least so far as can be seen from the extant portion, he does not speak as one bewailing his lot and reproaching his enemies, but as a warrior who has fought a battle for God and religion and has come out victorious.

[262] Fürst in his German translation of the work (Leipzig, 1845), pp. 19 f., notes, suggests, however, that the words ומי שיש לו מהם אויב מזיק וכו׳ (*Emūnōt,* ed. Slucki, p. 6) allude to David b. Zakkai and other enemies of Saadia, which is not improbable; comp. below, note 496.

[263] See above, notes 247-249.

He states explicitly that his purpose in relating the circumstances and "how he had prayed unto God for deliverance," was merely that he might serve as an example to others; that "if they had to endure similar insults and injuries at the hands of the wicked, they might remain firm and pray to God rather than lose heart and surrender." [264]

As that part of the work which contained Saadia's detailed account of the events is lost, it is impossible to say what he meant by his "deliverance." Even if it was merely a reference to his steadfastness and faith in God in times of trouble and distress, it is obvious from the marvelous mental vigor and activity manifested in the works he wrote during this period, that his reverses did not dishearten him or weaken his lifelong efforts to further the cause of Judaism and Jewish thought. Moreover, it is safe to assume that during the time of Saadia's retirement he was supported morally and, if need was, also materially,[265] by devoted adherents, thus making it possible for him to give himself to his studies. The intrigues of Aaron Sarjâdah and the extortion of money from the communities by the Exilarch, whereby Saadia's removal was effected, must have filled all right-thinking people with horror and contempt for the victors and with increased love and reverence for the victim. The numerous admirers of the deposed Gaon in and outside of Bagdad no doubt continued to recognize him as their teacher and spirit-

[264] See Malter, *JOR., N. S.*, vol. III (1912-1913), p. 492.

[265] There is no sufficient ground for the assumption that Saadia ever was in need of pecuniary support. We may assume, with more probability, that he was a man of independent means. It is even questionable whether he received a salary, while occupying the Gaonate. Nathan ha-Babli only mentions that Joseph b. Jacob was the recipient of a fixed salary. David b. Zakkai in his Letter of Excommunication (Harkavy, p. 232), in speaking of the good he had done for the supposedly ungrateful Gaon, does not allude to a salary, but if the passage (*ibidem*, p. 233, lines 16 ff.) is correct, accuses him of having appropriated to himself the donations of the communities for the academy. However, the sources do not allow of any categorical assertion in this matter; comp. Poznański, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. III (1912-1913), p. 400, top.

ual leader, and to befriend him in every way possible. Free from the cares and responsibilities of office, Saadia was assidiously devoting his time to literary work, when an unexpected incident brought a change in the situation, which led to his re-installation into office.

It was litigation between two parties that had brought about Saadia's deposition, and it was again litigation that opened the door to his rehabilitation as Gaon of Sura. Two litigants decided to have their dispute arbitrated by notables. The one chose Saadia, the other nominated the Exilarch. The latter, who considered it a personal insult that anyone should dare to recognize as judge a man whom he had deposed and excommunicated, at once sent for the offender, probably demanding of him to drop Saadia or prepare for punishment. The man had enough moral stamina to refuse the demand, whereupon he was seized and given a severe beating. Wounded and his clothes torn to shreds, he left the Exilarch's office crying aloud, and telling whomever he met on the street what had been done to him. The incident aroused great indignation in the community, especially as the man so maltreated was a stranger, or at any rate was not under the jurisdiction of the Exilarch, and therefore had a right to choose as his judge whomsoever he wished.

The people's patience had now reached its limit. Everybody in the community was tired of the long-standing feud, and public opinion demanded that the matter be settled. The last act of violence on the part of the Exilarch brought the Jews of Bagdad to their feet. Their representatives visited Bishr b. Aaron, one of the most prominent men in the community and the father-in-law of Sarjâdah, the apostle of hatred and feuds, and told him that the situation had become unbearable. Finally, they said to him: "Rise to action, for it is your duty, and we shall assist you in the effort to put an end to this strife, which is fomented only by your son-in-law Sarjâdah."[266] Bishr, probably himself not quite satisfied

[266] Nathan, p. 82. The words להסיר המחלקת שאינה תלויה אלא בחתנך do not mean that peace depended solely on Aaron Sarjâda, so as to warrant the conclusion that when peace was established, it was through the winning over of the latter, but declare that

with the policies of his son-in-law, realized the earnestness of the plea. He agreed to take upon himself the task of restoring peace. He called upon the influential men of the community, and arranged with them to meet in his house at an appointed date. The Exilarch, too, was invited, and came. Then, in the presence of the whole assembly, Bishr addressed the Exilarch in the following way: "See what you have done! How long will you keep up this quarrel without fearing God's punishment? Fear your God and desist from strife, for you know how grave are its consequences. It is time now that you try to improve your conduct toward Saadia, that you make peace with him, and abandon whatever grudge you have against him." Dabid b. Zakkai, instead of resenting this unexpected admonition, showed himself exceedingly conciliatory. Without argumentation, at least as far as can be learned from the words of the narrator, he at once declared himself ready for peace.

By this act of self-denial, as well as by the generosity he displayed later on, David b. Zakkai fully redeemed himself. It would seem that the wrongs he had committed toward Saadia in the heat of conflict were not wholly due to faults of character, but sprang rather from the ungoverned impulses of a hot-headed aristocrat with a somewhat exaggerated opinion of his inherited dignity and place, who would not brook interference on the part of one whom he had himself appointed to office and naturally considered his subordinate. That he fully appreciated Saadia's high qualities,[267] he had manifested in the very beginning by the fact

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his son-in-law was the only cause of the trouble, and that it was therefore Bishr's duty to step in the breach and secure peace. That Bishr actually "succeeded in overcoming the hostility of his son-in-law" (Graetz (English), III, 200) is not warranted by the sources; see below, p. 125.

[267] It is interesting to note that in his Letter of Excommunication (Harkavy, p. 232, top, lines 18 ff.) the Exilarch enumerates the good qualities of Saadia, as pleasant manner, modesty, meekness, etc., by which he had won his heart and the hearts of the people, but declares all these qualities to have been a sham, calculated to deceive him and others.

that he had made the appoinment in spite of the caution of the pious Nahrawâni. But later, after the quarrel had broken out, even when passion and anger biased his judgment, he must often have deplored the turn affairs had taken. Unlike Kohen Ẓedeḳ and the cunning Sarjâdah, he had the welfare of the Sura Gaonate at heart, and was desirous of maintaining it on a high level. What he had achieved through the long fight, however, was quite contrary to his purpose, for Sura must have lost appreciably in prestige and standing during the period of inner strife and dissension. Moreover, he had come to see that in spite of excommunication and deposition the best elements as well as the rank and file of the people remained loyal and friendly to the fallen Gaon.[268] Kohen Ẓedeḳ, the Gaon of Pumbedita, who, in the interest of his own college, had joined the cause of the Exilarch, had in the meantime passed away (935), and his successor, a certain Ẓemaḥ b. Kafnai, was entirely insignificant. Altogether, David had come to the realization that he had been on the wrong side, which had turned out to be also the weak side.

In view of all this we need not be suprised at the radical change in the Exilarch's attitude, and his unqualified response to Bishr's appeal for peace. Bishr did not lose any time. As soon as he had the assurance of the Exilarch, he left the assembly room and betook himself to Saadia, whom he invited with all the people in attendance, to follow him to one of his houses, in the same enclosure, opposite the building in which the Exilarch and his party were waiting. Arrived there, Bishr addressed Saadia with a speech similar to that which he had made to David b. Zakkai, admonishing him to conclude peace. Saadia, of course, was only too glad to follow the suggestion, and without condition assured the mediator of his desire for harmony. Thereupon the leading personages present in both houses formed themselves in two divisions, the one conducting the Exilarch, the other Saadia, and each proceeded toward the other until they met. The

[268] So Nathan, p. 80, and Mas'ûdi, *l. c.* (above, note 250, end).

two men, who for the last six years had fought one another so bitterly, now embraced and kissed, and their reconciliation, as shown by later events,[269] was sincere and complete.

One of the happiest men in Bagdad was Bishr himself, who felt that he had accomplished a great thing in bringing about the longwished-for reconciliation. It happened that the day on which this reconciliation took place was the Fast of Esther.[270] Bishr in elation over his success, begged all present not to leave his house, but to read there the Scroll of Esther, and after breaking the fast to stay with him the whole night for general rejoicing. The Exilarch and Saadia, however, declined the invitation, the former proposing instead that either Saadia should dine in the evening with him, or he should dine with Saadia in the latter's house. As each party was anxious for the honor of having the other as guest, it was agreed that the matter should be decided by lot. The lot fell in favor of the Exilarch. Saadia accordingly went to the house of David b. Zakkai, and stayed with him during the two days of Purim. The two strong men had much to discuss and many an incident for which to express mutual regret, but the two days of happy conviviality wiped out the old differences and banished unpleasant memories. When on the third day, they were to part again, they keenly felt the relief from the burden of enmity that had weighed so heavily on their souls, and were resolved to atone for their sins against one another by establishing and maintaining a bond of genuine friendship and mutual respect.

Saadia was now about to be formally re-installed into his former office. The Caliph Al-Râḍi and his vizir 'Ali b. 'Isâ were not unfavorably inclined toward him, so that no objection from that side was to be feared. Some embarrassment seems to have been felt on both sides regarding the future status of R. Joseph b. Jacob, whom David b. Zakkai had appointed Gaon in place of Saadia, and whose services had now become unnecessary. But R. Joseph, it appears, did

[269] See below, p. 127.

[270] The 27th of February, 936.

not raise any difficulty. He retired to private life with the provision that his salary continue undiminished. Saadia again became Head of the Sura academy,[271] and the new order of things seems to have satisfied all parties concerned. The only man of importance who remained sore and disappointed was Saadia's arch-enemy, Aaron Sarjâdah, the troublesome son-in-law of the peace-maker Bishr. There is not the least indication in our source that he had in any way participated in the conciliatory proceedings instituted by his father-in-law. It cannot be supposed that the narrator, who appears to have been careful throughout in relating all details, would carelessly have omitted so important a fact as the winning over to Saadia's side of an opponent like Sarjâdah, who, next to the Exilarch, was the most conspicuous figure in the opposition. Nor can the reconciliation of Sarjâdah be assumed as a matter of course on the ground that it was his father-in-law who had brought about peace. On the contrary, from the words of the several members of the community who in first appealing to Bishr for mediation, said that it was only his son-in-law who supported the conflict,[272] it may be deduced that Bishr and Aaron were in disagreement on the matter, and there is nothing to assure us that the latter subsequently changed his mind. Sarjâdah was not of the same spirit as the Exilarch. The latter was quite satisfied with his Gaon. What he wanted was subordination, to which, he thought, his position entitled him. Sarjâdah hated Saadia personally. As noted already, he had an eye to the Gaonate himself, and, besides, was always extremely jealous of the haughty and independent foreigner in the chair. The out-

[271] Abraham b. David, p. 66, top, states explicitly that Saadia was not reinstalled, but his statement seems to rest on a misunderstanding of the words of Sherira, which are not quite clear on that point; comp. Rapoport, תולדות ר"ס, n. 1; Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו (1904), IV, 141, note (see on the other hand Brüll, *Jahrbücher,* IX, 120). Abraham b. David is refuted also by the considerable number of Responsa written by Saadia in his official capacity as Gaon. This matter, however, cannot be discussed here and will be taken up at a later stage of the present work; see below, note 276.

[272] See above, note 266.

come of the long feud, on which he had spent a fortune, could only be most galling to him. Being a man of large means and of imperious nature, he would not accept his defeat with good grace. Various circumstances make it highly probable that soon after the reconciliation he left Bagdad and settled in Pumbedita, the seat of the rival Gaonate.

Years before, Sarjâdah had been made the recipient of great honors in that institution. The Gaon Mubashshir (918-926) had assigned to him, on his visits during the Kallah months, a seat in the "great row," a distinction usually reserved for academic members of the rank next to that of the *'Allufim*.[273] Some of the members of the academy, who, like the late Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ, had opposed Saadia, were naturally not satisfied with his coming into power again. One of them, Hananiah, the father of the famous Gaon Sherira, became Gaon of Pumbedita not long after Saadia's re-installation (938-943). He is known to have been at enmity with Saadia.[274] It is therefore quite natural that after what had happened in Sura, Sarjâdah should have affiliated himself with the rival academy from which he had received honors, and where he found sympathizers of note. He probably did all in his power to raise the standard of that academy, supporting it with his means, and strengthening it against the competition of Sura. At the same time he was preparing the ground for the execution of his long cherished plan of becoming Gaon himself; and Pumbedita proved a much better field for his operations than Sura. When the Gaon Hananiah died (943), he was to be succeeded, according to the rules of the academy, by a certain Rabbi Amram, but Sarjâdah exercised such power over the authorities, and so intimidated the candidate, that the latter did not dare voice his aspiration.[275] Sarjâdah appointed himself Gaon and ruled with an iron hand until the time of his death (961).

[273] Sherira, p. 41, top. For the meaning of the "great row" (דרא רבא) see Poznański, ענינים שונים, Warsaw, 1909, p. 47; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica*, II, 315, n. 3.

[274] See above, note 239.

[275] Sherira, at the end of his Letter.

The description of Sarjâdah's career has carried us a little beyond our point. The digression needs no excuse, however. For the purposes of a biography it is essential to know of what calibre were the hero's friends and foes. Sarjâdah played too prominent a part in the dispute about the Sura Gaonate for us to have let him drop out of sight as soon as his part in the play was over. His subsequent career serves to bring out more clearly the character of the man against whom Saadia had to contend. But whatever the truth about Sarjâdah may be, whether he remained for a time in Bagdad or went at once to Pumbedita, it is certain that Saadia was not again disturbed in his Gaonate. His relations with the Exilarch remained peaceful and amicable to the end. From the large number of Hebrew and Arabic Responsa written by Saadia in his capacity as Gaon, to various communities in and outside of Babylon, many of which belong to this later period,[276] it appears that under his presidency Sura was again looked upon by all Jewry as the center of learning and authority. No doubt, he wrote and completed during this period some of his numerous scientific works, but they cannot be designated with certainty.

The period of renewed co-operation between Saadia and the Exilarch was rather short. About three to four years after their reconciliation David b. Zakkai passed away (940). He was succeeded by his son Judah, the same, who, ten years before, had raised his hand against the Gaon. Judah died at the end of seven months, leaving a son twelve years old. Saadia on this sad occasion again showed the nobility of his character. The orphaned boy was taken into his house and treated as his own son. The Gaon sent the lad to school and tried to give him a good education, fitting for his future position of Exilarch.[277] Providence, however, had decided otherwise: Both the Exilarchate and the Sura Gaonate were

[276] See above, note 271. The assumption that they were all composed in the last year of his Gaonate (Graetz (English), III, 201) is unfounded; comp. Harkavy, תשובות הגאונים, p. 389; Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur,* p. 48.

[277] Nathan, p. 82.

soon to go out of existence. Within two years after the death of David b. Zakkai, Saadia's earthly career was prematurely ended, and the conditions that followed made the continuation of either institution impossible.

Saadia was but fifty when he died, in September, 942, common era.[278] As he left no son fit to succeed him,[279] the ever available R. Joseph b. Jacob, whom David b. Zakkai had once appointed counter-Gaon, and who was retired after the reconciliation of Saadia with the Exilarch, was again called into office. This time he clearly demonstrated his incompetence. Lacking the support of a strong Exilarch, as David b. Zakkai had been, and having as rival the learned and iron-handed Aaron Sarjâdah, who about that time (943), seized the Pumbedita Gaonate,[280] he was unable to keep the Sura institution alive. Pumbedita received most of the revenues from the communities, and attracted large numbers of pupils, while Sura declined more and more. Realizing

[278] This date is based on Mas'ûdi, *l. c.*, p. 113 (Carra de Vaux, p. 160; see above, note 20), who says that "Saadia's death occurred after 330" of the Heǵira. Other authors give the date 941/2, which corresponds to the date 1253 of the Seleucidan era given by Sherira (comp. Rapoport, בכורי העתים, 1828, p. 15, n. 1; Steinschneider, *CB., col.* 2158); for the discrepancy between the dates see Engelkemper, *De Saadiae Gaonis Vita,* p. 14, n. 3 [see in particular the *Postscript*]. Abraham b. David, p. 66, says that he died "of melancholia" (מן המרה השחורה) which Steinschneider (*Arabische Literatur,* p. 47) cleverly modifies by "*in* (for *an*) *Melancholie,*" adding that the great struggles and trials Saadia had gone through may indeed have hastened his death. Some Ḳabbalistic authors volunteer the information that Saadia was buried at the foot of Mount Sinai (Jehiel Heilprin, סדר הדורות, Warsaw, 1891, p. 143); comp. Engelkemper, *l. c.*, p. 14, n. 4. The famous traveller Benjamin of Tudela in his *Itinerary* (London, 1840), I, 69*a*, reports that Saadia was buried in Sura.

[279] See below, p. 132.

[280] That it was Sarjâda, who in his desire to do away once and for all with the Suran Gaonate had gradually undermined the position of the weak Rabbi Joseph and caused him to desert his place, is significantly hinted at by Sherira, who with a fling at both men remarks that R. Joseph's position had lost greatly in dignity, and he could not hold his own *even* against R. Aaron (ולא הוה ליה פתחון פה אפילו בהדי רב אהרן)!

the doom of his Gaonate, R. Joseph decided to abandon it to its fate. He emigrated to Baṣra, where he remained until his death. The academy was closed, after it had been in existence with but little interruption for over seven hundred years. About half a century later it came to temporary life again, under circumstances that have not been sufficiently cleared up. It seems that great struggles had again broken out in Babylonian Jewry, the famous Pumbeditan Gaon Sherira and his staff having probably opposed the re-establishment of the Sura Gaonate, as the meagre revenues from the communities did not suffice to support two institutions, and perhaps also, for other reasons.[281] The fallen Gaonate

[281] The source of the information that Sherira fell into trouble toward the end of his Gaonate is Abraham b. David, p. 67. He merely states that malicious persons had arraigned Sherira and his son Hai before the Caliph who ordered their imprisonment and the confiscation of all their property, so that they were left without a livelihood. Abraham does not even hint at the cause of this trouble, and modern historians have suggested various theories. Graetz (English), III, 233 f., assumes that the people were dissatisfied with the rigor of Sherira's administration. Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו (1904), IV, 154, asserts that objection was made to Sherira's appointment of his son Hai as successor. Neither of these explanations is satisfactory. To my mind it was again contention between Sura and Pumbedita that brought about the intervention of the government. Prominent citizens of Bagdad probably endeavored to re-establish the Sura Gaonate, perhaps under the headship of Dosa, the learned son of Saadia (see p. 132). Sherira and Hai must have opposed the idea bitterly, as at that time the revenues of the Gaonate had decreased so much that Pumbedita, though alone in the field, could hardly keep itself alive. As once before, in the time of Saadia, the contending parties appealed to the Government, and the result was the Gaon's imprisonment. Influential friends of Sherira and Hai secured their liberation, whereupon a compromise was reached, to the effect that the Suran Gaonate be restored under the presidency of a Pumbeditan scholar, Samuel b. Hophni, as against Dosa. The two institutions were then closely linked together by Hai's marrying the daughter of Samuel, and henceforth both did their work in perfect harmony. This course of events is strongly suggested also by a Genizah fragment (*JQR.*, XIV, 308), in which Samuel b. Hophni appeals to a community or communities for the support of Sura. He assures the latter that by giving his daughter in marriage to Hai perfect peace

was, however, reorganized under the headship of R. Samuel b. Hophni, a great scholar from the Pumbedita academy and grandson of the Gaon Kohen Ẓedeḳ, whilom opponent of Saadia. Peace was finally established between the two institutions, Sherira's famous son, the later Gaon Hai, marrying the daughter of Samuel b. Hophni; and the two academies got along financially as well as they could.

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had been established between the two academies, and that Sura is therefore entitled to its share. The words, כי נעשה שלום גמור ביניהו ובין מר רב שרירא גאון . . . . ועם גאון בנו, do not necessarily mean that prior to this the issue was between him and Sherira personally, as interpreted by Margoliouth, the editor of the fragment, for what Samuel wished particularly to emphasize was that the two *academies* made peace. But even if Margoliouth's interpretation were correct it would not vitiate our argument, for Sherira and Hai must have opposed the revival of Sura on principle, and would therefore have objected also to a candidacy of Samuel. The arrangements for peace, the fragment states, were made shortly before Sherira's death (טרם אסיפתו ב' שנים; comp. Marx, in Neumark's *Journal of Jewish Lore,* Cincinnati, 1919, p. 400). This tallies exactly with the account of Abraham b. David, who makes the imprisonment of Sherira occur towards the end of his life. The words of Abraham b. David ונתלה רב שרירא בידו אחת והוא כבן מאה שנה ולא הוסר מגאונות which so far have defied all attempts at interpretation (see *e. g.* Graetz, *Geschichte* V, (4), 368, n. 2; Weiss, דר"ו (Wilna 1904), IV, 154, note; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 98, n. 1; Selig Cassel, in his famous article "Juden," in the Encycl. of Ersch and Gruber, II, vol. 31, p. 192, n. 28, and later in his *Wissenschaftliche Berichte . . . . der Erfurter Akademic . . . .* I, Erfurt, 1853, p. 161, who quotes parallels from Oriental history of people being hanged by one hand) will now receive the right sense. For בידו אחת, though found with some variants in all MSS of the סדר הקבלה and in later works (*e. g.* the זכר צדיק, Neubauer, *MJC.,* I, 92, 117), we should read במלכות, meaning that after the imprisonment Sherira, through the intervention of friends, "regained influence with the *government* and was not removed from the Gaonate." It is true that many scholars of fame have offered other explanations for the corrupt phrase (ונתלה רב שרירא בידו אחת) one proposing בידי אשה אחת, another (Luzzatto, quoted by Graetz, *l. c.*) בידי אחותו, a third one ונֶחלה מיד וימת, and so on (see Levy, *Neuhebr. Wörterb., s. v.* בְּיָד); but all this is in the face of the fact that the same Abraham b. David uses the phrase ונתלה במלכות in other passages of his work to express the same thought as that in the passage before us. Thus, in his presentation of the quarrel

Samuel, who was one of the most learned Geonim, followed entirely in the footsteps of his great predecessor Saadia, producing a considerable number of important works, among them philosophical commentaries on the Bible.[282] He succeeded in keeping alive the Sura Gaonate for about forty years, but it never regained the preëminence it had enjoyed under Saadia. Samuel died in 1034, and the academy was then closed for ever. Only four years later his son-in-law Hai, the Gaon of Pumbedita, also passed away, and this death ended the history of the Geonim.[283]

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between Saadia and the Exilarch, when he reaches the point of the latter's gaining the upper hand with the Caliph (Neubauer, *MJC.*, I, 65, line 4 from below), he says ואח"כ נתחזק דוד ונתלה במלכות. In the same sense he uses the phrase ונתלה במלך ("and we shall gain influence with the king") in the case of the brothers Ibn Ġau (*ib.*, p. 70, line 6). In the latter passage also a number of nonsensical variants are found in the MSS., proving that the copyists did not know the meaning of the phrase. Later authors merely copied Abraham b. David with the mistakes. It should be noted that the verb תלה is used in a similar figurative sense in the Talmud *p.* Berakot, 4, 1, near end: אשרי אדם שיש לו יתד להתלות בה. It should be remarked that the phrase occurs in this sense also in connection with ביד (comp. Mann, *JOR., N. S.*, vol. X, p. 123: ויתלה עצמו ביד גוי), which would make it possible to accept the emendation of Luzzatto. But it is improbable that a sister of Sherira, of whom we hear nowhere else, should have been the one to exercise such influence. See also B. Lewin, רב שרירא גאון, Jaffa, 1916, p. 29.

Through the rectification of this error the whole sentence becomes clear. The words והוא כבן מאה שנה do not intend to state Sherira's age at the time he died, as interpreted by Weiss, *l. c.*, for this the author had stated before (p. 66, line 8 from below). Besides, the ensuing words ולא הוסר מגאונות would then be entirely out of place *after* the announcement of Sherira's death. Abraham only means to say that when Sherira regained his influence with the government and was freed from prison he was nearly an hundred years old, that is either 97 or 98 years, and after his liberation he was allowed to resume the Gaonate. Owing to his old age, however, he abdicated shortly after the occurrence (998) in favor of his son Hai.

[282] See Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur*, § 65.

[283] "It is true" says Graetz (History, III, 253), "that the college [of Pumbedita] immediately chose a successor [to Hai], who acted at once as Gaon and as Exilarch, it seems only in order to have the

In conclusion a few words may be added about Saadia's family at the time of his death. As we have seen above,[284] Saadia was a father when he left Egypt. In his letters to his former pupils he twice refers to his children.[285] If our assumption is correct, that the lengthy panegyric on a Gaon by his secretary has reference to Saadia, he had three or four sons and two married daughters at the time of his first occupancy of the Gaonate (928-932). The daughters, perhaps also one of the sons, must thus have been born in Egypt. A brother is mentioned often in the same panegyric.[286] He seems to have belonged to Saadia's household, as did the sons-in-law with their children. We further learn from the eulogy that at the time it was written another child was about to be born to the Gaon.[287] This child was Dosa, who later attained fame. At Saadia's death (942), this Dosa was of tender age, and naturally could not be considered as his father's immediate successor. The older sons, as also the brother and the sons-in-law, if they all survived Saadia, probably lacked the scholarship and other qualities necessary for a Gaon. When Dosa grew up and was recognized as a great Talmudic authority, he may have laid claim to the position of his late father. It is therefore probable that he had some part in the struggles that preceded the appointment of R. Samuel b. Hophni to the Gaonate of Sura.[288]

But all this must remain a matter of mere conjecture so long as we have to rely on the sources now available. Some of

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two offices buried together in the same grave with his person." In 1040 the successor, named Hiskiah, a descendant of David b. Zakkai, was slandered at court, imprisoned, tortured and then executed; see Graetz, *l. c.*, p. 254; comp. Poznański, רב דוסא ברב סעדיה גאון. Berditschew, 1906 (reprint from *Ha-Goren,* vol. 6), p. 7.

[284] See chapter 1.

[285] See above, pp. 55 f.

[286] Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 67, top, 69, top, 71, line 4 from bottom; Mann, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. IX (1918-1919), p. 159, l. 15; comp. in particular above, note 11.

[287] *Ibidem,* pp. 66, lines 25-26; 67, line 19; see above, notes 13, 14.

[288] See above, note 281.

the many unexplored Genizah fragments may, we hope, shed new light on this dark period. Thus much, however, is certain—this learned son of Saadia was looked upon as one of the most eminent scholars of the time, not only by the Jews of Babylonia, but also by those of foreign countries, especially Northern Africa and Spain. Various communities addressed religious and legal questions to him as they had done to previous and contemporary Geonim. Several of his authoritative Responsa are still extant, while others are referred to in the sources. From a passage in one of these Responsa[289] it appears that he was the head of a college, whose location cannot be ascertained.[290] Later authors often refer to him as Gaon. Aside from his Talmudic learning he occupied himself with philosophic studies, following therein the example of his father. In a marginal note to an Arabic manuscript of Maimonides' "Guide of the Perplexed," the writer, in all probability Maimonides himself, mentions Dosa among other authors who had refuted

[289] See Poznański's essay on Dosa (quoted above, note 283), p. 9, whence all other details given in the text are taken.

[290] I am inclined to think that Dosa is the author of the fragmentary letter in Ginzberg's *Geonica,* II, 87, in which the sons of Naṭira and of Aaron Sarjâda are mentioned as the leading members of the Bagdad community. Sarjâdah was already dead, as the writer adds to the names זכר הנאספים לברכה, hence he must have been writing after 960. As Ginzberg properly remarks, the whole trend of the letter makes it appear clearly that the writer was a man of considerable influence and high position. That he was a Gaon is precluded by the fact that he resided in Bagdad. But Dosa may have continued the work of his father as the head of a college in the City of Bagdad, which in the course of time gained great authority, though it was not considered officially a Gaonate. Later authors were thus justified in referring to Dosa as Gaon; comp. Poznański, *l. c.,* pp. 9, 15, 21, bottom, 23 f., and especially the references in the "Supplement," *ibidem,* p. 27. Dosa and his supporters, probably the same sons of Naṭira and perhaps also the sons of Sarjâda, may have tried later on to transplant the college to Sura and establish it there as a regular Gaonate, with the result that not Dosa, but Samuel b. Hophni got the position. Dosa reached an age of about 90 years; see Poznański, *l. c.,* p. 8, and above, notes 13, 14.

the theory of the eternity of matter.[291] His fame reached also Ḥisdai Ibn Shapruṭ (915-70), the renowned Jewish statesman at the court of the Caliph 'Abdur-Raḥmān at Cordova, with whom he entered into correspondence. At Ḥisdai's request Dosa wrote the biography of his father, Saadia, describing therein also all "the good he [Saadia] had done for Israel."[292] This biography, which no doubt contained all the material, the want of which has been so keenly felt in the course of this presentation, is unfortunately lost.

[291] Munk, *Notice sur Rabbi Saadia Gaon,* Paris, 1838, p. 13, and in *Guide des Égarés,* I, 462; Poznański, *l. c.,* p. 25; comp. above, note 241.

[292] Abraham b. David, p. 66; comp. Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur,* § 32; Poznański, *l. c.,* pp. 9 f.

PART II
THE WORKS OF SAADIA GAON

Chapter VI

SAADIA'S WORKS

Saadia's literary activity embraced nearly all the branches of knowledge known and cultivated among the Jews and Arabs of his day. His works, which have come down either complete or in a fragmentary form, or are known only from quotations in the writings of later authors, cover the following fields of learning with their respective subdivisions:

A) Hebrew *philology* (comprising *grammar, lexicography,* and *exegesis*);
B) *Liturgy* (including *poetics* in general);
C) *Halakah* in its manifold ramifications (covering the various branches of the Jewish religious and civil law);
D) *Calendar* and *chronology* (largely controversial);
E) *Philosophy* (especially the philosophy of religion and embracing the author's systems of *ethics* and *psychology*);
F) *Polemics* against the Karaites and other opponents of traditional Judaism (of diversified content and written at various periods of the author's life).

There is no possibility of ascertaining the exact chronological order of the works of Saadia belonging to the various branches of learning enumerated.[293] So far as these branches

[293] In the various attempts that have been made at a chronological arrangement of Saadia's works, too much emphasis is laid on the references found in his writings, from one to another. Such references do not prove that the work referred to actually preceded in time that in which the reference is found. It is known that Saadia was constantly changing and improving upon his writings (comp. Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 30) and of some, as the *'Agrōn* (see p. 139) the Sefer *Ha-Galui* (p. 269), parts of the *Kitâb al-Amânât* (p. 194), and several of his commentaries on Biblical books, he even prepared more than one edition. He may therefore have inserted in revising his works of an earlier period, references to others composed at a later date. Thus, in his Commentary on Proverbs (ed. Derenbourg, Paris,

themselves are concerned, it may however be assumed with sufficient reason that they were taken up by Saadia for literary presentation in the order here given, although some works in the field of liturgy, or Halakah, etc., may have preceded in time some under the heading of philology. In the following pages I shall attempt to give a general characterization of Saadia's writings without entering upon a detailed account of the contents of each book or fragment. Such an account would reach far beyond the limits set to the present work.

PHILOLOGY

a) *Grammar and Lexicography*

Saadia was the father and founder of Hebrew philological science.[294] He laid down for the first time, so far as is known, scientific rules for a systematic treatment of the Hebrew language. These were set forth principally in three books:

1) *'Agron* (אגרון), a Hebrew dictionary in two parts. In the first part all the words (nouns, verbs, etc.) were arranged

1894) he refers twice (pp. 94, bottom, 195, top) to that on Isaiah (ed. Derenbourg, Paris, 1896), while in the latter (p. 126) he refers to the former; comp. Derenbourg's Introduction to his edition of the Commentary on Proverbs, p. vii, n. 2; Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVIII, (1906), 318; Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 30, n. 7. Moreover, some of these references may have been added on the margin by later readers and then put into the text by copyists; comp. Harkavy, *Ha-Goren,* VI, 27. For a detailed discussion of the question of the chronology see Graetz, *Geschichte* (4), V, *Note* 20, pp. 523 ff. Quite inconsistent in this respect is S. Eppenstein in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Literatur im geonäischen Zeitalter* (reprint from *MGWJ.*, 1908-1913), Berlin, 1913. The publication of the Genizah fragments has established the fact that Saadia had left Egypt not later than 915, when he was in his twenty-third year. Eppenstein is well aware of this fact (p. 90, n. 4). Nevertheless he assigns (pp. 78, 89, 90, 119, 121) to Egypt, aside from the *'Agrōn* and the *Kutub al-Lugah,* also several commentaries on the books of the Bible, the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz* (written in 926), the Commentary on the *Book Yezirah* (written in 931), and, naturally, all the books mentioned therein, as the Commentaries on Genesis and Isaiah (comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 66, n. 23) and on the Tractate Niddah (see Bibliography, III, no. 10). It is neither possible that Saadia wrote so many works before reaching the age of 23, nor is there any proof that he ever returned to Egypt after his sojourn in Asia (Eppenstein, pp. 103, 116). [See, however, *Postscript,* p. 420.]

[294] See above, pp. 34 f.

in alphabetical order according to their initial letters, to help writers of poetry to make acrostics. In the second part, the final letters of the words were alphabetically arranged, to facilitate the making of rhymes. The whole was thus intended to be a guide in the art of Hebrew versification. The definitions in this lexicon were Hebrew and there was a rhetorical Introduction in a pure Biblical vocabulary, provided with vowel points and accents, in which Saadia briefly summarizes the history of the Hebrew language, deplores its woful neglect by the Jews of his time, and urges them to devote themselves again to its study and cultivation. He then turns to the exposition of certain fundamental rules of Hebrew grammar.

Saadia wrote this work when he was about twenty. Several years later he issued an enlarged edition, in which each word of the dictionary was followed by its translation into Arabic. He furthermore inserted portions treating of the various subjects and forms of poetry. This addition induced him to change the title of the work and call it "The Book on Hebrew Poetics" (כתאב אלשער אלעבראני).[295] Finally he added an Arabic Introduction wherein he gives a brief account of the contents of the work, mentioning incidentally some of the early Payyeṭanim, such as Jose b. Jose, Yannai, Eleazar Ḳalir, and others. These references make this Introduction highly valuable.

Unfortunately only the two Introductions and a portion of the dictionary have been preserved.[296] Nor are the manuscripts of the Introductions in our possession quite complete, the Arabic being defective at the beginning and the Hebrew at the end.

2) *Kútub al-Luġah* (כתב אללגה), "Books on Language," a grammatical work in twelve parts, which the author sometimes designated as separate books, at other times collectively

[295] See, regarding this matter, Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 61; Bacher, *RÉJ.*, XXXIX, 207; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 70, n. 5.

[296] See the *Bibliography, s. v. 'Agrōn*, p. 306.

as one book.[297] Of this work, the oldest grammar of the Hebrew language known, only a few fragments are extant.[298] Several passages from it are quoted by Saadia himself and in the works of later authors.[299]

3) *Tafsîr al-sab'îna láfẓah al-fáridah* (תפסיר אלסבעין לפטה אלפרדה), "Explanation of the Seventy Isolated Words," a list of the so-called hapaxlegomena and other very rare Hebrew and Aramaic words of the Bible. Saadia interprets the words by way of analogy, quoting for each word a passage from post-Biblical literature (Mishnah, Babylonian and Palestinian Talmud, Targum, and Midrash) in which it occurs, thus leaving no doubt as to its meaning. The list actually contains *ninety* words. Probably a slip of the pen occurred in writing the Arabic word for ninety in the unique MS., which bears the title given above.[300] The

[297] Thus, in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* p. 45, line 5, Saadia refers to the book as כתב אלדגש ואלרפי, meaning those parts or chapters of the work that dealt with the question of *dagesh* and *raphe,* while on p. 75, last line but one, he refers to it under its general title *Kutub al-Luġa,* and quotes a lengthy passage from its first chapter (see the *Bibliography,* p. 307). In the *Sefer ha-Galui* (see below, p. 271) he again quotes it simply as "the Twelve Parts;" comp. Malter, *JQR.,* N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 494, n. 25. Harkavy who maintained the erroneous theory that the work is identical with the *'Agrōn,* collected all the material relating thereto as remnants of the latter, and treated it as such (*Zikron,* V, 32-38, 60-132). This theory has been fully disproved by Bacher (*REJ.,* XXIV, 307 ff.) and others, and Harkavy himself subsequently modified his views (*Ha-Goren,* VI, 30).

[298] My statement (*JQR., N. S.,* vol. III (1912-1913), p. 494, n. 25) that "nothing" has been preserved of this work is to be corrected accordingly.

[299] Hebrew authors, as Dûmâsh b. Labraṭ, Abraham Ibn Ezra, and others quote it under the title ספר (כתב) צחות לשון הקדש, or ספר צחות לשון העברי (כתב); comp. Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 32, n. 3; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 60; Bacher, *Leben und Werke des Abulwalîd.* p. 91, n. 3; *A. I. E. als Grammatiker,* p. 18; *Anfänge,* p. 39.

[300] This would indicate that the title and whatever Arabic there is in the book was written in Arabic characters (see note 305), as only in these *sab'îna* (70) can be read for *tis'îna* (90), the words being

booklet has been frequently published with learned notes.[301]

In addition to these works devoted almost entirely to grammar and lexicography, Saadia wrote occasionally on the same subjects in some of his other works. Especially in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah*[302] are there numerous passages dealing with Hebrew grammar.[303]

b) *Biblical Exegesis*

Hebrew philology in its incipiency was not regarded as an independent discipline, but merely as an auxiliary science to Bible-exegesis. Saadia's work in the field of grammar and lexicography is therefore to be considered only as the scientific apparatus for the main object of his studies, the interpretation of the Scriptures. Indeed, exegesis was the chief occupation of Saadia's life. To it he devoted the greater part of his literary activity. In all probability he began while he was still in Egypt, to make translations of Biblical books accompanied with commentaries and continued this work in the following periods of his vicissitudinous life, changing, correcting, and enlarging the exegetical portions as his knowledge increased. His translation of the entire Bible into Arabic, the first[304] to be made

distinguishable only through diacritical points, which may have been missing; see, however, Geiger, *Wiss. Zeitschrift,* V, 324; Peritz, *MGWJ.,* 1899, p. 51; see also as regards the real number of the words Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2196, no. 29.

[301] See the *Bibliography,* p. 307, no. 3.

[302] See below, p. 192.

[303] Most of the grammatical passages in the Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* however, are repetitions from the *Kutub al-Luġah;* see above, note 297. A grammatical work of Saadia on punctuation, נקוד רב סעדיה, is quoted by Rashi on Psalms, 45, 10, but it is not certain that it was a separate work. It probably formed a part of the *Kutub al-Luġah;* comp. Bacher, *Anfänge,* p. 60, n. 2, and Steinschneider, *Vorlesungen über die Kunde hebräischer Handschriften,* Leipzig, 1897, p. 15.

[304] It is true that an Arabic translation of the Bible is said to have been prepared prior to Saadia by the Christian scholar Ḥonein b. 'Isḥâk (809-873). This translation, however, was not made from the Hebrew text but either from the Greek or the Syriac; see

directly from the original (Masoretic) text, ushered in a new epoch in the history of civilization in general and of the Jews in particular. As the Septuagint in ancient times was instrumental in blending Greek and Jewish thought into what is known as Hellenism, subsequently giving rise to the Christian religion; and as Mendelssohn's German translation of the Bible in recent times introduced the new literary era of modern Jewry; so Saadia's Arabic translation and his interpretation of the Scriptures, paved the way for the glorious Spanish-Arabic period during which the Jews again became the mediators between the Orient and the Occident, and themselves made original contributions to all branches of mediæval science.

Saadia's translation has become the standard Arabic Bible for all the Arabic-speaking Jews and for the Christian scholarly world down to the present time. According to Abraham Ibn Ezra,[305] Saadia wrote the translation in Arabic characters, contrary to the general practice of Jewish authors, who wrote Arabic in Hebrew characters. His object was in all probability to make the Bible intelligible to Muhammedans as well as to Jews who had not sufficient learning

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Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XII, 498, n. 2, where further references are given. For Saadia's acquaintance with some of Ḥonein's works see below, note 532. For a supposed translation of the Bible into Arabic by Abû Kathîr, the teacher of Saadia, see Steinschneider, *AL.*, § 23. A recent attempt to disprove Saadia's priority as translator (*JQR., N. S.*, vol. IV (1913-1914), pp. 537 f.) is based on too puerile arguments to require discussion.

[305] See Abraham Ibn Ezra's Commentary on *Genesis*, 2, 11. The question was often disputed, but it is now generally assumed that Saadia wrote all his Arabic works in Arabic characters, which were subsequently changed by the copyists into Hebrew characters; see for the literature on the subject Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XII, 613-616; comp. Kaufmann, *Attributenlehre*, p. 89, n. 150; Ewald, *Beiträge*, p. 5; Landauer's Introduction to the *Kitâb al-Amânât*, pp. xii ff. Among the many Genizah fragments of Saadia's writings I know only one in Arabic characters: Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. xlix, p. 132; comp. the *Bibliography*, III, p. 347, no. 5.

to understand the original.[306] This is fully in keeping with what is generally recognized as the characteristic features of Saadia's exegesis. His chief thought was to make the Bible a book accessible to all; to present the Scriptures in a rational, intelligible form. Hence he does not always bind himself to the rules of the Masorah, to grammar, or to common usage; but, aiming at the greatest possible clearness and consistency, often disregards all difficulties arising from rule and custom. He does not hesitate to insert words and phrases, or to divide and connect verses and sentences in his own way, when necessary to convey to the reader the intended sense.[307] To this extent his translation is at the same time an interpretation, and Saadia, being himself well aware of the fact, called it *tafsîr,* which means both commentary and translation.[308] His work, however, is far from

[306] See Landauer's Introduction to the *Kitâb al-Amânât,* p. xii; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 85, nn. 1, 2, where more references are given. Of interest in this connection is an Arabic passage quoted by Merx, *Die Saadjanische Uebersetzung des Hohen Liedes,* Heidelberg, 1882, p. 5, n. 1. In his Introduction to the translation of the Pentateuch (ed. Derenbourg, p. 4) Saadia states that he undertook the work at the request of some [Israelites], who asked him to do so, "in order that they might understand the meaning of the Torah," which likewise goes to show that in the time and country of Saadia Arabic was better understood than Hebrew by the Jews in general; comp. *JQR.,* X, 256, n. 2.

[307] Instances are altogether too numerous to be here adduced. They were collected by various authors to some of whom reference may here be made: Dukes, *Beiträge,* II, 85 ff.; Poznański, *MGWJ.,* 1902, p. 370, and lately L. Bardowicz in his interesting work *Die Abfassungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen,* Berlin, 1913, pp. 102-107. A striking example of the liberty Saadia took in transposing the verses in order to get the desired sense is found in his Commentary on Proverbs (ed. Derenbourg, p. 51), where the verses 10-12 are taken from the middle of chapter 9 and placed at the end thereof, so as to get the proper contrast between the honest and dishonest, as described there, vv. 1-9, 13-18.

[308] See Munk, *Notice sur Saadia,* p. 5, n. 1; Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2182; Bacher, *RÉJ.,* XXXIX 206, no. 8; *idem, JE.,* X, 583; Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 21, no. 2; Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, pp. 138, n. 2; 180, n. 6; *JQR.,* XIII, 61, no. 77. See also *JE.,* III, 166, 189.

being a paraphrase. Saadia took liberties only when he found it necessary to clear away obscurities; otherwise he followed the Scriptural text word for word.[309]

Another characteristic of Saadia's translation is the anxious elimination of all anthropomorphisms.[310] In this matter Saadia was not an innovator: he followed the so-called "Targum Onkelos,"[311] the ancient Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch; but he went far beyond his model. This often led him to quite arbitrary assumptions as to the possible meaning of certain Hebrew words.

From the Targum he adopted also the method of translating the numerous proper names occurring in the Bible, particularly those designating tribes or nations and places.[312] Here, too, he "bettered the example." Abraham Ibn Ezra[313]

[309] Comp. Hartwig Derenbourg's Introduction to the edition of Job, p. xi.

[310] Here again no attempt can be made at gathering the many hundreds of instances that evidence Saadia's efforts to remove the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic conceptions of God as they appear in the Scriptures. I refer the reader to the numerous works quoted below in the *Bibliography*, I, pp. 328 f., to which may be added Bacher, *Die Bibelexegese der jüdischen Religionsphilosophen des Mittelalters vor Maimuni*, Strassburg, 1892, pp. 1-44. According to Guttmann (*Die Religionsphilosophie des Abraham Ibn Daud*, p. 31) the "Commentator" blamed by Ibn Daud (*Emunah Ramah*, p. 89) for not having gone far enough in removing anthropomorphic ideas from the Scriptures through philosophic interpretations, is none other than Saadia; comp. below, note 607, end.

[311] Saadia's relation to the Targum has likewise been fully discussed in many of the works and articles referred to in the preceding note, especially by Munk, Geiger, Dukes (*Beiträge*, II, 81, n. 4), and Bacher; comp. the latter's *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar*, Vienna, 1876, p. 33; Schmiedl, *MGWJ.*, 1902, pp. 84-88, 358-361; S. Galliner, *Saadia Al-fajjûmî's arabische Psalmenübersetzung*, p. 10, n. 2.

[312] For the literature on this point see in particular Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, 48-58; Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar*, pp. 33-36. The translation of proper names has also been observed in the fragments of Aquila (Reider, *Prolegomena to a Greek-Hebrew and Hebrew-Greek Index to Aquila*, 1916, p. 20.)

[313] Commentary on Genesis, 2, 11; 4, 19; comp. Dukes and Bacher, as quoted in the preceding note.

severely criticizes Saadia's procedure in this matter, but suggests as a possible excuse that the translation was intended also for Muhammedans, who, if they found a large number of words untranslated, might say that the Bible contains laws which the Jews themselves [314] do not understand.

Among other peculiarities of Saadia's translation may be mentioned the frequent rendition of Hebrew words by Arabic words of similar sound, even when the latter do not possess exactly the meaning required by the Hebrew text.[315]

It is characteristic of Saadia's zeal in his work on the Bible that he prepared a double translation of most, if not all, of the books. The first, associated with an extensive Commentary (in Arabic *sharḥ*) was intended for learned readers. The other, called *tafsîr,* rendered the text in a form intelligible to the general public, as described above.

The significance of Saadia as a Bible exegete, however, comes into light more through his Bible commentaries than through his translations. A detailed characterization of Saadia's exegesis, as it appears in these commentaries, is not within the scope of the present work. In general it should be pointed out however, that Saadia's special merit as an exegete lies in his philosophic handling of the material. He did not merely translate and comment upon the passages

[314] The passage is misunderstood by Merx, *l. c.* p. 5, who puts the words לא ידענום into the mouth of the Muhammedans.

[315] See the numerous instances collected by Munk, *Notice,* pp. 55-57; Geiger, *Wiss. Zeitschrift,* V, 290; Haneberg (as quoted in the *Bibliography,* I, 319), p. 369; comp. the Introductions to the editions of the Psalms by the various authors quoted in the *Bibliography,* I, pp. 318 ff., and Poznański, *MGWJ.,* 1902, pp. 370 f.; Merx, *Die Saadjanische Uebersetzung des Hohen Liedes,* p. 13 (comp. J. Loevy, *MWJ.,* X, 34). The tendency to render Hebrew words by like-sounding words of the foreign language has been observed also in the Greek translation of Aquila (Brüll, *Ben Chananja,* VI, 300, no. 8; Reider, *l. c.,* p. 26) and in the works of authors later than Saadia; comp. Bacher, *Abraham Ibn. Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* p. 36; J. Loevy, *Libri Kohelet versio arabica, quam composuit Ibn Ghijath,* Leyden, 1884, p. 24; Kaufmann in Judah b. Barzillai's פרוש ספר יצירה, p. 336, note *ad paginam* 66.

of the Bible in their order. In a general Introduction to each book the basic principles in the light of which that book was to be viewed as a whole, were laid down, its contents briefly summarized, and the inner connection between its various portions clearly shown.[316] The Introductions[317] to the Pentateuch, Job, Proverbs, and the Psalms are classic examples in this respect. To some books of the Bible he wrote double commentaries.[318] By far the greatest part of the translations and commentaries is unfortunately lost.

LITURGY

As in all other branches of Jewish learning, so in liturgy Saadia was the pioneer and pathfinder. This is acknowledged by the many eminent authors who subsequently worked in this field, among them Maimonides.[319] Actuated by the desire to strengthen traditional Judaism against the onslaughts of its opponents, such as the Ḳaraites and other schismatics, and realizing the necessity of enlightening the scattered members of the Synagogue on all essential questions of their religion, it would have been surprising if Saadia had not devoted attention to the field of liturgy, on which the different parties in Judaism had at all times fought their religious battles. Moreover, liturgy is intimately connected with Halakah. It was, therefore of vital importance to fix the ritual in conformity with Halakic regulations.[320]

[316] Comp. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* pp. 80 f., and below, *Bibliography,* pp. 308, 311, 319 f. In connection with Saadia's Commentaries it is interesting to observe that he was in the habit of designating each book by a special title.

[317] See the *Bibliography,* under the respective works, pp. 308, 318-21.

[318] Comp. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 81.

[319] Comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 167.

[320] According to Ginzberg, *ZfhB.,* IX, 104-7, *Geonica,* I, 121, 167, n. 1, Saadia wrote the *Siddūr* for the congregations of his native country, Egypt. This may be accepted as a fact on the basis of the proofs adduced there by Ginzberg, as well as on general grounds (comp. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung,* Leipzig, 1913, p. 361). It is not proved, however, that the work was undertaken at the request of these congregations.

Saadia, therefore, set about the task of arranging a complete "Order of Prayers" for the whole year, embodying therein, besides all of the ancient and generally accepted standard prayers, many liturgical productions of famous synagogue poets, as well as various pieces of his own composition. Some compilations of prayers had existed prior to the time of Saadia,[321] notably the ritual of the Sura Gaon Amram b. Sheshna (856), commonly known as the "Order of R. Amram," with a history of its own, the influence of which on the development of Jewish liturgy throughout the Middle Ages has been by far greater than that of the ritual composed by Saadia. But aside from its small intrinsic value as a literary production, the work of Amram, on account of its unusual popularity, underwent such radical changes at the hands of later generations, that it is impossible to say what its original form was, and how much or how little of its present content can be attributed to the editor whose name it bears. It is even questionable whether Amram had any share in compiling the ritual, except for the Halakic rules and regulations embodied therein, which themselves are not free from later interpolations.[322] Compared with the work of Saadia the Order of Amram, even in its present augmented form, sinks into insignificance. Saadia may, therefore, properly be designated as the first scientific author in the field of liturgy, though the compilation by his predecessor may have been of some use to him. Saadia did not merely collect the existing prayers and arrange them in a particular order for private and synagogue use, as is commonly done by editors of prayer-books, but, following his general method in other branches of literature, he made the whole traditional

[321] As early as in the middle of the 9th century an order of the "Hundred Benedictions" (סדר מאה ברכות), the number recommended in the Talmud (Menaḥot, 43*b*) for daily recital, was compiled by the Suran Gaon Naṭronai b. Hilai (853), which was recently published by Ginzberg from a Genizah MS. (*Geonica,* II, 114-119); comp. for further details Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 119-123; Elbogen, *l. c.,* pp. 358 f., 565, no. 4.

[322] Comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 144; Elbogen, pp. 359 f.

liturgy the subject of scientific investigation. In an elaborate Introduction he showed the significance and necessity of prayer, its foundation in reason (שכל), and in the books of Holy Writ (כתוב), and the historic development of the different prayers during past generations (מקובל). He also took into consideration the various practices of communities and individuals in including or omitting certain prayers, and in each case expressed his opinion as to the permissibility of such customs, stating the reasons for or against the reciting of a given prayer. To whatever section of the book one turns, he finds the masterful hand of the scientific, logical systematizer and classifier, whose chief concern is to bring the scattered material under some general head or heads, so that the student shall get a clear perspective of the whole subject under consideration. Thus, for instance, in taking up the numerous short benedictions (*berakot*) he would first, by way of introduction, divide them into several classes: such as benedictions that are occasioned by the *obligatory* performance of a Biblical or rabbinical law, benedictions prescribed before the *voluntary* partaking of the good things of this world, which afford either bodily or mental pleasure, and so forth.[323]

The ritual itself he divides into two main parts, the one comprising prayers for every day, the other those for Sabbath, New-moon, Feasts and Fast-days. Each of these principal divisions is again subdivided into two parts, the one dealing with the prayers of the individual, the other with those of the community in the synagogue. In connection with these prayers he discusses the Halakic points bearing on them, quoting, or tacitly basing his decisions on, passages in both the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmudim.[324]

[323] For all the details here given see Steinschneider, Neubauer, and Bondi, as quoted in the *Bibliography*, II, pp. 329 f.

[324] Saadia himself (quoted by Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2205) states explicitly that he will not quote all the passages in Mishnah and Talmud on which he bases his views. This tendency to avoid as far as possible quotations from rabbinical literature is observable in other

As already noted, Saadia incorporated in his Order numerous liturgical productions of eminent synagogue poets, for example, the famous *'Abodah* (hymn for the Musaf-prayer of the Day of Atonement) of the Spanish ritual (אתה כוננת) and another one by the Payyeṭān Jose b. Jose (אזכיר גבורות אלה), a selection of *Hōsha'nōt* (hymns for the feast of Tabernacles), *Teḥinnōt,* and *Selīḥōt* (penitential prayers), many of which are not preserved elsewhere.[325] Here again he introduces the various compositions by valuable remarks relative to their place in the synagogue service and their importance there.

Great as was Saadia in the field of liturgy as the first scientific collector, systematizer, and expounder of the ancient material, his efforts did not stop here. He had begun, it seems, in early life to write religious poetry for private as well as communal use. His first work, the *'Agrōn,* was intended, as we have seen, to facilitate versification. An enthusiastic devotee of the Synagogue, and prompted by deep religious feeling, he endeavored to enhance the divine service by numerous liturgical compositions of his own. He wrote synagogue poetry of nearly all the forms and descriptions in vogue in his time. He himself informs us that he composed a large number of *'Abōdōt* for the Day of Atonement, but chose to embody only one in his Order because, he says, it was the shortest.[326] He likewise wrote numerous *Hōsha'nōt,* aside from those incorporated into his ritual. These, however, have not all been preserved.[327]

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writings of Saadia (see below, note 461; Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. x; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 166), and the reason in each case is that the works were intended also for the Ḳaraites, for whom that literature had no authority.

[325] See the enumeration in the *Bibliography,* II, pp. 330-335.

[326] See Bondi, *Der Siddur des Rabbi Saadia Gaon,* Frankfurt a. M., 1904, p. 38.

[327] Comp. Halberstam, *MGWJ.,* 1895, pp. 111 f., and below, *Bibliography,* II, p. 333, no. 5.

Among the species of poetry cultivated by Saadia his *'Azhārōt* (exhortations)[328] deserve special mention. They contain 119 four-membered strophes, dealing in ten groups—according to the Ten Commandments—with the 613 precepts of the Bible. They were no doubt intended to be recited in the synagogue.[329] On the same subject he composed also a lengthy didactic poem,[330] in six sections of twenty-two double lines each, corresponding to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. One section gives the alphabet acrostically in its usual order, and the next in its inverted order (תשר"ק), the last section containing, besides, the acrostic: "Sa'id (שעיד) ben Joseph 'Alluf,"[331] which proves that the poem was written between the years 922-928, when, as we saw in chapter three, Saadia occupied the position of an *'Allūf* in the Sura academy. We must likewise assume that the *'Azhārōt,* were composed during that period, for it has been discovered that the first line has the same numerical value (469) as סעיד בן יוסף אלוף.[332] The last section of the *'Azhārōt,* however, has only the acrostic "Sa'id ben Joseph," without *'Allūf.*

Apart from these pieces, which, owing to their considerable proportions, may be regarded as separate works, though they were embodied in his *Siddur,* Saadia is known to have composed a large number of Penitential Prayers (*Teḥinnōt*

[328] *Bibliography,* II, p. 331, no. 3.

[329] See Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xviii, bottom.

[330] *Bibliography,* II, p. 330, no. 2.

[331] See Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, 67, n. 11; in Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte,* p. 94, l. 4, read *sechste* for *erste.*

[332] Rapoport, in הצופה להמגיד, volume VI (1862), 325, see below, note 336, and for a similar signature of Saadia in another composition, below, p. 336, no. 4; comp. in particular Rapoport's Biography of Ḳalir, note 12, where numerous instances from the latter's *Piyyuṭim* are quoted, in which the author has signed his name by using words that have the same numerical value. Saadia took Ḳalir as a model in some other respects also; see above, p. 139 and below, p. 184. It should be noted in passing that the recently discovered portion of Saadia's Polemic against Ḥiwi, which was written about 927 likewise bears the acrostics סעיד אלוף and סעיד ראש כלה; see Davidson, *Saadia's Polemic against Hiwi,* New York, 1915, p. 34 f.

and *Selīḥōt*), some of which, in addition to those incorporated into the Siddur, have come to light only recently from the Genizah. From the same source came also an important *Tokēḥah* (Admonition) of eighty-eight lines, containing a fourfold alphabet in the acrostic.[333]

All these productions disclose Saadia's great imaginative power, and testify to his astounding mastery of the Hebrew language in writing verse. It is true that for our taste today, his verses are too artificial for poetic beauty. Moreover, his lines are often so obscure as to defy interpretation. This is not due to the inefficiency of the author in the use of the Hebrew language, but to the erroneous conception of style and rhetoric, prevalent among the Arabs and Jews of those times. It was thought that the more uncommon and obscure the words one was able to gather and weave into a composition, the more remarkable was his literary performance, and therefore the greater its merit. Authors would exhaust themselves in the search for the most out-of-the-way forms and phrases, and these would often be used in violation of all rules of grammar and syntax, thus making the verse or the rhymed prose largely unintelligible, or at least mystifying.[334] In his poetical productions Saadia followed this style to excess. He indulged in the most arbitrary formations of nouns and verbs, outdoing therein even some of the old Palestinian Payyeṭānim, by whom he was greatly influenced.

This general predilection for rare and abstruse words was accompanied by a fondness for all sorts of artificial rhymes, acrostics of names and alphabets, catch-words from Biblical passages, and the like. Such overloading of the verses produced obscurity. But these performances were admired,

[333] See the *Bibliography*, II, p. 334; 338, no. 8. For the origin of acrostics in general see Steinschneider, *Vorlesungen über die Kunde hebräischer Handschriften*, p. 3.

[334] Comp. Zunz, *Synagogale Poesie*, pp. 117, 119; M. Sachs, in קובץ מעשי ידי גאונים קדמונים (ed. Rosenberg), pp. 84 f.; especially the references in Harkavy, *Zikron*, V, 45, n. 7; comp. also Bardowicz, *Die Abfassungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen*, p. 62, n. 2.

because it was considered that they demonstrated the extraordinary skill and resourcefulness of the author in the handling of the language. To point out only one instance in Saadia's productions, we may cite his Introduction (פתיחה) to the *'Azhārōt*.[335] It contains fifteen four-membered strophes following the order of the alphabet. Each line of a strophe begins with a letter of the alphabet and rhymes with the other three lines. In addition, the first line of each strophe is preceded by a word from Ps. 68. 8 ff. (in consecutive order), which is more or less suggestive of the idea contained in the strophe, while the third line is led in the same way by the first word of each consecutive verse from Canticles.[336] Besides all this, the author has managed to work his name into the first line by an arithmetical device.[337] The last six strophes go far beyond even this, the lines being divided into hemistichs with the same rhyme and double acrostics. In the *'Azhārōt* proper a similarly artificial system is adhered to throughout.

With such complexity of the technic, it is not surprising that the author could not attain to beauty or even to any degree of clearness. No writer who subjects himself to such unreasonable restrictions can accomplish anything but a sort

[335] For other instances, see Elbogen, *Studien*, pp. 64, 82 f.; comp. Landshuth, עמודי העבודה, pp. 288 f.

[336] By way of illustration I give here the first strophe:

אלהים אָצַל יום הלזה מימים ימימה
בל יתחרוהו רבי כל היום והאימימה
שיר גתית ענתה בו ותשר ימימה
דורשתי למגן תורת ה' תמימה
בא"י מגן אברהם

The word אלהים (Ps. 68. 8) is the leader of the strophe. The first line, beginning אצל, has the numerical value of סעיד בן יוסף אלוף = 469. The word שיר (Canticles, 1. 1) leads the third line and can be read together therewith. The strophe is followed by the eulogy of the first benediction of the daily prayer, to which the fourth line contains an allusion in the word למגן. For the meaning of the whole see the commentary *ad locum*.

[337] See above, note 332.

of literary hotchpotch. Even the *'Azhārōt* of Solomon Ibn Gabirol, the greatest poet of the Synagogue, fall short, for similar reasons, of the sublimity often attained by this author.[338] Where Saadia did not resort to such artificial means, as for instance, in the aforementioned poem on the 613 precepts or in the recently discovered *Tokēḥah* and in the Polemic against Ḥiwi,[339] his verses are on the whole clear and smooth, though they never rise to the heights of poetic beauty.

Taken all in all, Saadia's attainments as a synagogue poet cannot be rated very high. But he has written some prayers in plain Hebrew prose, which, in grace and purity of style and in the fervency of religious emotion, rank among the best the Synagogue has ever produced. Two of these, called *Baḳḳāshōt* (supplications), have been adopted, wholly or partly, into various rituals. They may be considered as classics.[340] The one, beginning "Thou art the Lord, Thou alone," was destined by the author for Sabbaths and Feasts; and the other, beginning "To-day, too, I know . . . . that the Lord is God," for Fast-days. An Arabic version of the latter was made by Saadia himself, and a later author, a certain Ẓemaḥ b. Joshua, translated the former into the same language.[341] Both translations are found in Saadia's Ritual along with the Hebrew originals. Maimonides,[342] who was not too well-disposed towards prayers proceeding from the schools of the Geonim, recommended these prayers of Saadia for recital on the Eve of New Year's Day; and Abraham Ibn Ezra in his famous criticism of Ḳalir [343] expresses

[338] Comp. Landshuth, עמודי העבודה, p. 292.

[339] See the *Bibliography*, II, p. 338, no. 8; VI, pp. 384 ff.

[340] For all details see the *Bibliography*, II, pp. 331 ff.

[341] See Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XII, 485; *AL.*, § 234; Landshuth, *l. c.*, p. 287.

[342] In a passage from an Arabic MS. Responsum, quoted by Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2214; comp. also קובץ תשובות הרמב"ם (Leipzig, 1859), I, no. 128; Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 96, no. 6; Bondi, p. 18.

[343] In his Commentary on *Kohelet*, 5, 1; comp. Zunz *Synagogale Poesie*, p. 117, top; Landshuth, *l. c.*, p. 293.

himself with reference to them in the following words: "The Gaon R. Saadia in his two *Baḳḳāshōt,* the like of which no author ever composed, guarded himself against these four blunders [of Ḳalir]. His prayers are written in the language of the Bible, with due regard to grammar, without obscurities and metaphors, and without the use of Midrash." Baḥya Ibn Paḳûdah[344] likewise quotes approvingly a passage from the first *Baḳḳāshāh,* although, according to the custom of the Middle Ages, he does not mention the author by name but refers to him as "one of the worthies." Owing to its simplicity in style and to the deep religious fervor that breathes through its lines, most of the second *Baḳḳāshāh,* with some later, and even older, additions, has found its way into the Penitential Prayers (*Seliḥōt*) for the Eve of New Year, and in this form is referred to in mediæval literature as the "*Widdui* (Confession) of R. Saadia." There is, however, another short composition under this title, which is likewise written in a beautiful Biblical style.[345] These and other pieces assure to Saadia a place of honor among the best liturgical writers of the Synagogue.

Here, perhaps, is the place to discuss another product of Saadia's art of versification, though it does not strictly belong under the heading of liturgy. It is his "Poem on the Number of the Letters" (of the alphabet) occurring in the Bible.[346] It consists of twenty-eight[347] quatrains, twenty-

[344] *Duties of the Heart,* IV, 6, end. Luzzatto first identified the passage (*Litteraturblatt des Orients,* XII, 170; comp. Dukes, *Naḥal Ḳedūmim,* pp. 2, 26; Landshuth, *l. c.,* p. 293. Yahuda in his edition of the Arabic original of Baḥya's *Duties,* p. 224, top, does not realize that Saadia is here quoted; comp. Malter, *JQR., N. S.* vol. VII (1916-1917), p. 384.

[345] See the *Bibliography,* p. 333.

[346] For the Hebrew title and other details see the *Bibliography,* pp. 339 ff. According to Blau, *JQR.,* VIII, 352, the poem gives only the number of letters occurring in the Prophets and Hagiographa, to the exclusion of the Pentateuch; see Marx, *Journal of Biblical Literature,* XXXVIII (1919), 24, n. 3.

[347] In Schechter's *Saadyana,* no. xxvi, *verso,* line 3, the letters כגו are probably to be corrected to כח.

seven for the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, including the five final letters, and one additional quatrain for the letter *taw*, the last in the alphabet. The purpose of the whole is to show how many times each of the letters is found in the Scriptures, such counting having been commended in the Talmud (Ḳiddushin, 30*a*). The manner in which Saadia carries out this Masoretic task is extremely artificial, and cannot be here described in all its details.[348] The first word

[348] As no description can give an adequate idea of the technicalities of this poem, I subjoin, as an illustration, the first stanza of the Hebrew text with a few explanatory remarks:

אֹהל מכון בניני שׁשם עלו זקני
הקהל עש קרבני ולזבח תודה באו בני

פרוש: מנין כל אלף שבמקרא ארבעים ושנים אלף שלש מאות שבעים ושבעה סימן מ"ב אלף שע"ז והסימן להם>כל הקהל כאחד ארבע רבוא אלפים שלש מאות וששים><ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אלים חמשה עתודים חמשה כבשים בני שנה חמשה<.

The Aleph of אהל indicates the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet, to which letter the first quatrain is devoted; the letter מ of מכון, numerically equalling 40, and the letter ב of בניני equalling 2, indicate the number 42,200, while the initial letters שׁעז of the second hemistich equal numerically 377. We thus obtain 42,377, which is the number of times the Aleph occurs in the Bible. The word הקהל in the third hemistich alludes to the verse in Ezra, 2, 46, as quoted in the "Commentary," which gives in words the number 42,360, while the word ולזבח in the last hemistich recalls the verse in Numbers, 7, 17, which contains the numbers $2+5+5+5=17$; the two verses thus make together $42{,}360+17=42{,}377$, which again indicates the number of times the Aleph is found in the Scriptures; comp. J. Derenbourg, *Manuel du lecteur,* in *Journal Asiatique,* 1870, p. 546 (separate edition, p. 238). As regards the custom of counting the letters in the Bible and as to the correctness of Saadia's computation see the exhaustive studies of Ludwig Blau, *JQR.,* VIII (1896), 343 ff.; IX, 122-144, 471-490; XVI (1904), 357-372; comp. also Schapira, in the *Athenæum,* 1878, Feb. 23, no. 2626, p. 253.

In English the above quatrain would read as follows: "The Tent (*i. e.* the Temple), the foundation of my structures, whither my ancestors made pilgrimage, where the congregation offered my sacrifices, and whither my children came for the sacrifice of thanksgiving." The word עש is the payyeṭanic form for עשה often used by Saadia; comp. Derenbourg, *l. c.,* p. 447 (139), n. 6.

of each quatrain begins acrostically with a letter of the alphabet. The words that follow in the first two hemistichs begin with letters whose numerical value corresponds exactly to the number of times the letter in question is to be found in the Bible. The other two hemistichs contain each a word from a Biblical verse in which the number thus indicated happens to occur. The language of this mnemonic poem is very enigmatic and obscure, so that Saadia himself deemed it necessary to add to each quatrain a sort of "Commentary," to furnish a clue to its interpretation. I assent to the ascription of this *Perush* to Saadia for obvious reasons. It does not explain the stylistic difficulties and the real meaning of these peculiar verses. It merely states in plain words the number intended by the text and also quotes in full the Biblical verses mysteriously alluded to. I do not believe that anybody except the author himself could have found the key to this riddle. If any mediæval author had been so fortunate as to find the clue, he would certainly have furnished us with an extensive commentary.[349] It is needless to say that this composition is devoid of all poetic merit. Nor is it probable that the author ever intended to classify it as poetry. His object was to assist the memory by arranging the numbers of the letters in artificial rhymes. There is, however, aside from this didactic purpose, a general idea running through all the verses, and that is the expression of the hope that the Twelve Tribes of Israel will be freed from their captivity and return to the sanctuary at Jerusalem.[350] It is in keeping with this idea that most of the fifty-

[349] The anonymous author of the מחברת התיגאן actually ascribes the Commentary to Saadia; comp. Derenbourg, *Manuel du lecteur*, p. 547 (separate edition, p. 239) n. 1, who, however, does not sufficiently emphasize it, as the words וחזר ופרש clearly say that Saadia wrote the *Perush*. It should be noted that, as Derenbourg, *l. c.*, remarks, the editions as well as the MSS. contain only the second half of the commentary to each stanza, which gives merely the respective Biblical verses, while the first half, which indicates in each case the intended number, is to be found only in the מחברת התיגאן.

[350] Derenbourg, p. 548 (240). Some later writers, who saw no purpose in this poem, invented a curious story as the occasion of its composition, for which see below, note 661.

four Biblical verses which the author has chosen to indicate the numbers contain either one of the names of the twelve sons of Jacob, or a name of one of their descendants, or have otherwise some bearing on the restoration of Israel and of its ancient cult.[351]

HALAKAH

The study of the Talmud was at all times and in all countries the most essential part of Jewish education. The Talmud was the only subject in the entire range of Jewish knowledge that, as we should say to-day, was considered obligatory, although the Jews did not always have a compulsory school system in the modern sense of the word. It was a religious duty, incumbent upon every Jew, to study the Torah, and Torah meant above all the Talmud, for even the Bible was to be studied only through the spectacles of the traditional law, its commentary. It is thus only in quite recent times that a Jew, though he be a rabbi, may lay claim to Jewish scholarship without having in the least familiarized himself with the Talmudic literature. All Jewish authors who attained to prominence in other fields of learning, such as philology, philosophy, or even medicine and astronomy, were first equipped with a more or less thorough knowledge of the Talmud. Only then did they indulge their individual inclinations and choose their respective fields of literary activity. Saadia, the future Gaon, was no exception to this rule. The study of the Talmud and, as far as it existed, of the Halakic literature in general, was one of his earliest occupations. We are not in a position, however, to designate any of his numerous Talmudic works as belonging to the earlier period of his life, and thus being the immediate result of his first Talmudic studies. Nor is it possible to assign dates and periods to any of his various works on Halakic subjects.[352] On general grounds it may be assumed that his literary activity in the field of Halakah began

[351] Comp. Derenbourg, p. 449 (141), n. 13.

[352] See above, note 293, and below, note 376; comp. also the *Bibliography*, III, p. 345, no. 3.

after he had settled in Babylonia as a member of the academy and reached its height during his occupancy of the Gaonate, though some of the Halakic treatises on single subjects, to be mentioned below, may date from an earlier time. It was hardly necessary for Saadia to prove his Talmudic learning by great Halakic works to justify his appointment on the academic staff. He was known to the authorities personally and, besides, his numerous writings on subjects other than Halakah as, for example, his polemics against the Karaites, Ben Meir, and others, showed incidentally his thorough familiarity with the literature of the Talmud.

It is highly regrettable that the number of lost Saadianic writings is largest in the department of the Halakah. It is in this department more than in any other that Saadia's importance in his capacity as *Gaon* should show itself. Of all his works in the domain of the Halakah only two [353] have been preserved *in toto*. Of some others [354] a few small fragments were recently brought to light from the Genizah, while the rest are known only by their titles, or from quotations in the works of later authors. In addition there are about fifty complete Responsa written by Saadia to various communities. While it is thus impossible to appreciate the full extent of Saadia's Halakic activity, we can see from what is left, that in this field as in all others Saadia was the most important author among the Geonim. Unlike his predecessors in the Gaonate, who confined themselves to issuing legal decisions or to writing explanatory notes on single Talmudic passages, he viewed the literature of the Talmud in its entirety. To it he applied the same scientific method of sifting, analyzing, and classifying which is identified with his name in every field of literary endeavor. He grouped

[353] Namely, the "Interpretation of the 13 Rules" (see below, pp. 159, 342) and the "Book on Inheritance" (below, pp. 163, 344). We might perhaps count also the so-called Commentaries on *Berākōt* and on the Order of *Ṭehārōt*, for which see below, pp. 161, 342 ff.

[354] *Bibliography*, III, pp. 345-347, nos. 2-5.

and arranged its contents under general heads, and brought system into what might have been considered an irremediable chaos.

Saadia's work in the field of Halakah may be divided into three main parts: (1) Methodology; (2) Interpretation; and (3) Codification.[355] Among his methodological works two should be mentioned:

1. *Kitâb al-Madḫal* [*ilâ al-Talmud*] (כתאב אלמדכל [אלי אלתלמוד]), "Introduction to the Talmud," which seems to have been much in use. It is referred to in several Genizah fragments and in the works of later authors. The book was extant in the Orient as late as the sixteenth century, but since then all trace of it has been lost. The short extracts preserved in the work of a sixteenth century author show clearly the methodological character of Saadia's Introduction.[356]

2. פרוש י"ג מדות "Interpretation of the Thirteen Rules," written originally in Arabic and translated into Hebrew by Nahum ha-Ma'arābī of the thirteenth century. It is a Commentary on the "Baraita of Rabbi Ishmael" which occurs at the beginning of the *Sifra,* an Halakic Midrash on Leviticus. The *Baraita,* which originated in the school of the Tanna R. Ishmael (first and second centuries), contains an enumeration of thirteen hermeneutic rules for the Halakic interpretation of Scriptures. This initial part is embodied in the daily prayers of the standard ritual. In its extended form, as it appears in the *Sifra,* it contains also ample illustrations, taken from the Mishnah and old Halakic Midrashim, for the proper application of each rule. Saadia, realizing the fundamental importance of these rules for the Halakah, undertook to explain them in his own methodical way. Unlike the old *Baraita,* which only quotes passages as examples for the application of the rules, Saadia first gives a clear definition of the meaning and significance of each rule, classifies the laws falling under it, and then proceeds to give copious examples showing

[355] Comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 162.

[356] See the *Bibliography,* III, pp. 341 f.

its operation in given cases. He takes his material not only from Halakic literature, but also from various portions of the Scriptures, his avowed purpose being to extend the use of these rules to questions of morality and good conduct instead of confining it, as does the *Baraita,* to strictly Halakic matters.[357]

A few instances may suffice in illustration. The first rule deals with the "inference *a minori ad majus,*" or vice versa (קל וחמר). One of Saadia's illustrations is a reference to Exodus, 21, 10, where a husband of two wives is enjoined to fulfil his duty towards both, although no such injunction is given regarding a man with but one wife. Here, Saadia shows, the deduction by inference comes into play. If a man is in duty bound to satisfy the needs of two wives, although it may impose a great effort upon him, how much more is it incumbent upon him to discharge his duty as a husband if he has only one wife. Another illustration is derived from the Biblical injunctions to bring back to one's enemy his ox or ass that went astray and to release the enemy's ass that had fallen under its burden (Exodus, 23, 4.5). The inference is that the same law naturally applies to the ox and ass of a friend. Similarly, from the law that forbids a man with two wives, the one beloved and the other hated, to "make the son of the beloved the first born (by leaving to him a double portion of his possessions) before the son of the hated who is the firstborn" (Deut., 21, 15-17), we must deduce by inference that if the son of the

[357] For all further details see Müller's elaborate Introduction and notes, in *Oeuvres complètes de Saadia,* IX, pp. xxiii-xxxiii. Regarding the Baraita of the 13 Rules in general see Hoffmann, in Berliner's *Festschrift,* pp. 55-71; comp. also *ibidem,* p. 56, n. 2, with relation to Saadia. As to the supposed anti-Ḳaraite tendency see the references in Poznański's *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah,* p. 98 (to p. 259). According to Weiss דד"ו (Wilna, 1904), IV, 139, the פרוש י"ג מדות originally formed part of the דרכי התלמוד, that is, the work mentioned here as no. 1. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 50, thinks that both may have formed one work together with the סתו"א (see under *Chronology,* no. 2), which is not improbable; comp. Bardowicz (quoted above, note 334), pp. 81-87, 100.

beloved happens to be the firstborn, the father cannot acknowledge as such the son of the hated, if for some reason he might desire to do so. Saadia adds one more illustration of this rule, and concludes by saying that in this way many more laws and ideas should be derived from the Bible.[358] With the same painstaking care the remaining twelve rules are elucidated by numerous instances from the Scriptures.

Almost complete uncertainty prevails when we turn to the second group of Saadia's Halakic writings, the interpretation of Mishnah and Talmud. Commentaries by Saadia on the "Six Orders" are mentioned by an author of the twelfth century.[359] It is not clear whether he means the Mishnah only or also the Talmud. A so-called Commentary on the whole tractate of *Berakot*, which, however, contains only a few pages of lexicographical notes, was recently found among the MSS. of the Genizah and published under the title פרוש רב סעדיה על ברכות. Its authenticity is doubted by some; others deny it altogether, but admit that it contains remnants of a larger Commentary on the Mishnah by the Gaon, now lost.[360] Saadia's son Dosa speaks in one of his Responsa[361] of his father's Talmudic Commentaries (פרושי), and references to such Commentaries by Saadia are found

[358] *Oeuvres*, IX, 74; comp. Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 162 f.

[359] I refer to the traveller Pethahiah of Ratisbon; comp. Graetz, *Geschichte*, V, 4th ed., p. 531, no. 12; Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar*, p. 20, n. 2; see also Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, 69; Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2160, no. 1; Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 164; below, note 642.

[360] See the *Bibliography*, III, pp. 342 ff. It should be noted that the explanations of the words הימרות and איספרגום, quoted by mediæval authors in the name of Saadia (see *Oeuvres*, IX, p. xxxv, n. 5), are actually found in this booklet, pp. 9*b*, 17*a*; comp. also 13*b*, n. 101, and the other passages noted by the editor, Wertheimer, p. 6, letter ג. See, however, J. N. Epstein, *Der gaonäische Kommentar Zur Ordnung Tohoroth*, Berlin, 1915, p. 31, n. 1.

[361] See Schechter, *Saadyana*, p. 59, l. 2; Poznański, רב דוסא ברב סעדיה גאון (reprint from *Ha-Goren*, VI), p. 11, n. 26; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 118.

also in several Genizah fragments of Geonic origin.[362] None of the passages makes it clear whether reference is had to commentaries on entire tractates, or only to explanations of single portions of the Talmud, such as are found in some of Saadia's Responsa.[363] Moreover, the word פרושי may refer to Saadia's commentaries on Biblical books, in which explanations of single words occurred.[364] It is most probable, however, that the expression "commentaries" used in these sources with reference to Saadia's writings is to be taken literally. Saadia must at least have written such Commentaries on the tractates *Pesaḥim, Soṭah, Baba Meẓi'a, Baba Batra,* and on the whole Order of *Ṭehārōt.*[365] He has, besides, commented upon special chapters of Talmudic tractates in separate writings. One such Commentary, covering part of the seventh chapter of the tractate *Shabbat,* is mentioned in Genizah MSS. under the title "Interpretation (of the Mishnah treating) of the Main Kinds of Work," which are forbidden on the Sabbath (תפסיר אבות מלאכות).[366] However, nothing definite can be said on the nature of Saadia's Talmud exegesis. With the exception of the short glosses contained in the later compilations on *Berakot* and on the Order *Ṭehārōt,* as well as a few quotations in other works, not even a fragment has so far come to light.

[362] Schechter, *Saadyana,* no. xxxii, l. 2; xxxiii, l. 2; comp. Azulai, שם הגדולים, ed. Benjacob, *s. v.* Saadia.

[363] See e. g. *Oeuvres,* IX, 87, n. 7; 103, n. 3; 125, n. 5.

[364] This is, indeed, the assumption of Poznański, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. III (1912-1913), p. 410. See also J. N. Epstein (as quoted in n. 360), n. 4.

[365] Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 164, n. 1; comp. Poznański, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. III, p. 410; J. N. Epstein, *l. c.,* pp. 30 ff., who proves that the Commentary on the Order of *Tehārōt,* which has been ascribed to the Gaon Hai, is essentially a work of Saadia, redacted by a later author.

[366] It is mentioned in the book-list published from a Genizah MS by Bacher, *REJ.,* XXXIX, p. 200, no. 28; comp. *ib.* p. 203, and Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 128. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 119, suggests that it may have been a commentary on the whole tractate Shabbat, which is not very probable, as we would expect a more general title.

Our knowledge of the third group of Saadia's Halakic writings, those dealing with the codification of the rabbinical law, is not much fuller. A considerable number of treatises on various sections of rabbinic law is attributed to Saadia by mediæval authors and in old book-lists recently discovered in the Genizah. But of all these works only one [367] has been preserved completely. Of some,[368] scant remnants were brought to light lately, while others are known either by their original Arabic, or by (original ?) Hebrew titles. They may be enumerated as follows: 1. On *Inheritance;* 2. On *Pledges;* 3. On *Testimony and Contracts;* 4. On *Incest;* 5. On *Meat disqualified for Food* (*terefah*); 6. On *Usury;* 7. On *Defilement and Purity;* 8. On (legal) *Gifts;* 9. On the *Gifts due to the Priests;* 10. On the *Laws concerning Menstruation.*[369]

It is hardly probable that these treatises were the partial execution of a plan to codify the entire law by a succession of such monographs. There is no obvious reason why, if this were the intention of the author, he should have picked out from the bulk of the rabbinic law precisely the subjects enumerated. From a passage in one of the treatises [370] we learn that he had intended to write more monographs on questions of jurisprudence, but not that he had in mind to codify the entire Talmudic law in such fashion. In all likelihood most of the treatises were called forth by interpellations on their respective subjects [371] or by controversies between Rabbanites and Ḳaraites.[372] Others the

[367] The *Book on Inheritance;* see the *Bibliography,* III, p. 344.

[368] Those mentioned below, nos. 2-6; see the *Bibliography* of the respective works, pp. 345 ff.

[369] From quotations in the *Tur* of Jacob b. Asher, הלכות צדקה, §§ 247, 251, it appears that Saadia wrote also a treatise on *Charity.* Nothing, however, is otherwise known about it. See also below, p. 397.

[370] The treatise on *Testimony and Contracts;* see the *Bibliography.* p. 345; comp. *Saadyana,* p. 66, ll. 10-13; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 120, n. 7.

[371] Thus the treatise on *Pledges,* see Harkavy, תשובות הגאונים, p. 393, top.

[372] Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 50, top.

author may have been stimulated to write by similar monographs on legal questions in the literature of the Arabs.[373] This seems to be particularly the case with the treatises on *Inheritance* and on *Usury*. The former is the one that has come down to us in its entirety. It may therefore serve as an example of Saadia's method of treating Halakic problems. The Introduction to this work, its style as well as its content—the very fact that there is an Introduction—is a conspicuous example of Arabic influence. No Jewish author before Saadia had written an Introduction to his work. The Mishnah, the Talmud, the Midrashim, and, so far as known, other works of the pre-Saadianic time have nothing whatever in that form.[374] Moreover, a remarkable feature of this Introduction is its absolute lack of bearing on the Halakic contents of the book itself. After the fashion of similar prefaces in the works of Muhammedan writers, it contains enthusiastic praises of the Creator, describing in a purely philosophic manner, His high attributes, such as existence, eternity, and unity, emphasizing His infinite bounty toward all creatures, and showing the necessity of our belief in Him and our obedience to His laws. The last idea is practically the only point that may be construed as an Introduction to the book itself, which is a classification of the laws of inheritance laid down in Holy Writ and developed in the Talmud. More than one hundred questions concerning the rights of relatives to inherit movable or immovable property are systematically discussed and clarified on the basis of traditional literature.[375] The influence of Muhammedan jurisprudence is obvious throughout the work, a fact which leads to the assumption that it was written after the author had sojourned for some length of time in Babylonia, and had familiarized himself

[373] See the works referred to in the *Bibliography*, p. 344, no. 1.

[374] Not even the הלכות גדולות and others mentioned by Müller, *Oeuvres*, IX, p. viii.

[375] Sometimes Saadia allowed himself to decide even against the Talmud; comp. below, notes 462, 518.

thoroughly with the contents of kindred Arabic literature and the methods employed therein.[376]

In addition to these three groups of Saadia's Talmudic works, mention must be made of the Halakic *Responsa* issued by him from time to time in his capacity as Gaon. To publish legal and religious decisions in response to questions was the exclusive right of the heads of the Babylonian academies during the entire Geonic period.[377] About fifty of such Responsa issued by Saadia on various Halakic questions have been collected. Most of them seem to have been written originally in Arabic and translated later into Hebrew; others were written in Aramaic, the official language of the Geonim.[378] As an author of Responsa also, Saadia occupies a unique position among the Geonim. Here, as in all his writings, one can recognize at once a superior scientific method and the systematizing thought of the philosopher, who seeks a basis of broad principles for every subject he treats. Saadia's method is so distinctive that it is possible to discern his authorship of a Responsum though no other direct evidence be available. In the Responsa, as elsewhere, he numbers and classifies the points under consideration, bases his arguments on verses from Scripture and passages from Mishnah and Talmud, and then supports his deductions by the authority of reason. One instance out of many: Reuben advanced money to Simeon and Levi, partners, in consideration of a share in the profits of the partnership. Later Reuben withdrew his contribution. Subsequently the entire capital of Simeon and Levi was confiscated by the govern-

[376] The assumption of Müller (*Oeuvres*, IX, Hebrew Introduction, p. xvii, bottom, French, p. xiii), followed by Ginzberg (*Geonica*, I, 165, n. 3), that the book on *Inheritance* was the first production of Saadia in the field of the Halakah is therefore to be rejected; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 48, no. 3; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, pp. 121 f. Muhammedan influence is very evident also in the small fragment of the treatise on *Testimony and Contracts;* see the *Bibliography*, III, p. 345, no. 3.

[377] Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 8 ff.

[378] For all details relating to the *Responsa*, see the *Bibliography*, III, pp. 349 f.

ment. Judah, a creditor of the partners, tries to recover his debt from Reuben as partner of Simeon and Levi. Reuben defends on the ground that he was not a partner but a creditor; which plea was confirmed by Simeon and Levi. A court of arbitrators imposed an oath on Reuben to the effect that he was not a partner and that he had no money of the firm in his possession. Judah submitted. Later he changed his mind and renewed his claim on the ground that the defendant did not take the oath seriously, because it was informal. The matter was then brought before Saadia. The Gaon decided that Judah had no claim against Reuben, because the partners were Simeon and Levi, whereas the defendant was merely a creditor, like the plaintiff himself, and there was no privity of contract between them. The plaintiff had no more claim against the defendant on account of the defendant's contribution to the partnership than the defendant would have against the plaintiff for the plaintiff's contribution to the partnership. The arbitrators should, therefore, have dismissed the case outright. Moreover, the arbitrators had no right to administer to the defendant an informal oath, because where the necessity of a formal oath is in doubt, a compromise on an informal oath is not permitted. Now Judah's assigning as error the informality of the oath is without any ground. First: Judah was not entitled by law to any oath at all, but only to a declaration of a general ban against any one who was in partnership with Simeon and Levi and refused to acknowledge it. Second: The oath was not informal, because it was pronounced over a holy book; and third, which is most important, the plaintiff had no right to disqualify the oath of the defendant on the assumption that the latter did not attach sufficient significance to it. It makes no difference what a person thinks of the validity of an oath administered to him so long as it is recognized by the law. "The fire," Saadia adds, "burns alike those who believe in its burning effect and those who do not believe in it; the knife cuts into the flesh of him who recognizes its cutting capacity and of him who disputes it." This interesting comparison he finds indicated in the words of

Jeremiah, 23. 29: "Is not My word like as fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"[379] He then proceeds to prove that a deposition like the one in question, made by a party while holding a sacred object in his hand,[380] possesses all the sanctity and binding force of a regular Biblical oath. Several verses are quoted in support of this view.

Besides the collection of Responsa there is a large number of quotations from the Halakic writings of Saadia in the works of later authors. Altogether, over one hundred and fifty of such quotations, some of considerable length, have so far been collected. Two-thirds of them are of Halakic-liturgical content. They were mostly derived by the mediæval authors directly or indirectly from Saadia's Ritual-Order. The rest, with a few exceptions, were taken from the Halakic works of Saadia now lost.[381]

To complete the account of Saadia's activity in the field of Halakah, it should be noted that, not only are his liturgical writings based in the main on Halakic laws and regulations, but most of his works in other lines, especially those on the calendar, as well as his numerous polemic writings against the Ḳaraites, have as their object the defense of Talmudic Judaism and naturally discuss Halakic problems. Even in his main philosophic work, the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* and in his commentaries on the Bible, he often resorts to Talmudic disquisitions.[382] Thus, wherever we turn, we are constantly reminded that the author was not merely a writer of philosophy or exegesis, but fundamentally a great Talmudist—a Gaon.

[379] *Oeuvres,* IX, p. 97, no. 10.

[380] Comp. Müller *ad locum,* p. 98, n. 5.

[381] For all details regarding the *Quotations* see the *Bibliography,* III, pp. 350 f.

[382] See below, note 462. In the *Sefer ha-Galui* too he devoted a chapter to the discussion of matters relating to the history of the Mishnah and the Talmud; see below, p. 270.

CALENDAR

In nearly all the writings of Saadia a tendency toward polemics is observable. It cannot be admitted that his only, or even his chief, purpose was to refute, directly or indirectly, the views of the Karaites and other dissenters, as some scholars have recently asserted.[383] The most that can be said is that Saadia was of a positive and aggressive disposition and often emphasized too vigorously his own views as against those of others, even in noncontroversial works. There are, however, among his productions, many writings ostensibly purporting to solve the problems of one or another branch of science, but which, as a matter of fact, were undertaken for the sole purpose of refuting opponents. To this class belong particularly his disquisitions on the calendar. These were not the natural result of Saadia's studies in a specific field of learning, but were called forth by actual happenings of a politico-religious character, which stirred the communities of Oriental Jewry.

In an earlier chapter of the present work[384] the origin and cause of this phase of Saadia's activity have been discussed at length. I may therefore limit myself here to an enumeration of its literary product.[385] Some of these writings, as will be seen below, were elicited by the authorities of the Babylonian academies. Some of them have been preserved only in a few fragments of the Genizah, or are known from quotations only.

1. *Sefer Zikkārōn* (in full ספר זכרון ומגלה לדרות), "A Record-book and Memorial-Scroll for (future) Generations," deals with the differences between the "Four Gates," —*i. e.*, the four principal rules of the Jewish calendar as accepted by the Babylonian authorities—and the rules advocated by their opponent, the Palestinian Ben Meir. The book was written by Saadia during the summer of the year 922

[383] See below, notes 547, 548.

[384] See above, pp. 69-88.

[385] For details regarding all the works enumerated below see the *Bibliography*, under *Calendar*.

(common era) at the request, and under the name, of the Exilarch David b. Zakkai, and was designed to be read in public on the twentieth of Elul. Copies were sent not only to the communities in Eastern countries, but also to those in Egypt and elsewhere.

2. *Four Gates* (ארבעה שערים), an exposition of the four principles of the traditional calendar, mentioned as a work by Saadia in ancient book-lists discovered in the Genizah. It is quite improbable that the book is identical with the one mentioned in the preceding paragraph. For although the extant fragment of the *Sefer Zikkaron* likewise deals with the "Four Gates," the object is not to explain their meaning, but to refute the calculation of Ben Meir. Moreover, the discussion of this matter is incidental, and not the main burden of the book to justify the title ארבעה שערים.

3. *Sefer ha-Mo'adim* (ספר המועדים), on the appointment of the Jewish festivals in accordance with the accepted calendar, written at the request of the Exilarch, probably soon after the controversy with Ben Meir (about 922-923 c. e.). Only a few, partly mutilated, fragments have so far come to light from the Genizah.

4. Three *Letters,* two in Hebrew and one in Arabic, addressed to his pupils in Egypt, soliciting their assistance in the suppression of Ben Meir's changes. The two Hebrew letters were written in the winter 922, c. e., while the Arabic letter is dated "Sixth day, the eleventh of Tebet," without the year, which obviously is 923. In this letter, covering over two printed pages, Saadia informs his pupils that he is sending them two copies of his *Sefer Zikkārōn,* mentioned above (No. 1), and he implores them to act, and make others act, in accordance with its teachings.

5. *Seder* (*or Sōd?*) *ha-'Ibbūr* (סדר [סוד] העבור), "The Order (or Mysteries) of the Calendar," referred to by several authors of the Middle Ages, as well as by a Muhammedan author of the tenth century. Nothing seems to have been preserved of this work. The Arabic fragment published some years ago probably belongs to another work by Saadia. If this be the case, it will also be open to

question whether the book under consideration was written in Hebrew, as the title, if such it is, would seem[386] to indicate, or in Arabic, the language of nearly all of Saadia's works.[387] It is possible, however, that the Hebrew authors did not refer to any particular work of Saadia's bearing the title given above. They may have used the expression genetically to designate Saadia's theories on the calendar,[387a] as laid down in his works on this subject, in his Bible Commentaries, and in his polemic writings against the Ḳaraites, all of which dealt with this perpetual subject of controversy between Ḳaraites and Rabbanites.

It has also been suggested that the work is identical with the one to be mentioned below under the heading of Chronology (No. 1). This view does not commend itself, because the Hebrew term *'ibbūr* was used more particularly to designate the calculation of the calendar, concerning which nothing is found in the chronological work referred to.

In conclusion it should be explicitly stated that Saadia wrote about the calendar in many of his works in other

[386] The citation of a work by a Hebrew title is not sufficient proof that the work was written in Hebrew. Later authors who wrote Hebrew often quoted Arabic works by a Hebrew phrase, which would properly indicate the contents (comp. for instance above, note 299), just as those who wrote in Arabic referred at times to Hebrew works by an Arabic translation of the title.

[387] Among all the writings of Saadia only a few are known to have been written in Hebrew. These are (aside from liturgical pieces and two letters) the *'Agrōn* (first recension, see above, pp. 138 f.), the *Sēfer ha-Galui*, the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim*, the *Refutation of Ḥayawaihi* (Ḥiwi), the *Poem* on the Alphabet (pp. 154 ff.), and probably also the ארבעה שערים. To these can now be added the *Sefer Zikkarōn* (see below, p. 414, no. 9) and perhaps also the *Refutation of Daniel al-Ḳumisi* (see the *Bibliography*, p. 398, no. 10; comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 261, n. 3. As regards the *Responsa* see the *Bibliography*, p. 349; comp. Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters*, p. 909, n. 33. In view of these facts it is not altogether improbable that the פרוש על סדר טהרות (see below, p. 343) is not a translation but merely a recast of Saadia's original work, by a later author, perhaps a pupil of Saadia; comp. Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 118, n. 3.

[387a] See, regarding this matter, the references given by Steinschneider, *Bibliotheca Mathematica*, 1895, p. 103, n. 11.

fields, including even liturgy, as, for instance, in his *Siddūr*.[388] In the foregoing list, only those writings are included which, so far as may be judged from the existing material, dealt with the subject of calendar to the exclusion of all else.

CHRONOLOGY

The chronological treatises that have come down to us from the early centuries of the Middle Ages were not intended by their authors to serve as records of the history of the Jewish people. Such historical consciousness did not then exist among Jewish authors. The chronological lists they drew up were modeled in form after similar productions by Muhammedan writers, but the purpose was mostly religious. It was the continuity of Jewish tradition[389] that they endeavored to establish by means of such data, culled from the Scriptures and the subsequent traditional literature. This had become a necessity after the rise of Ḳaraism (eighth century) and other cults which disputed the authority of the Mishnah and the Talmud as a foreign element in Judaism, out of harmony with the genuine traditions of Israel.[390] Saadia, the most conspicuous champion of Rabbinism, certainly could not afford to neglect this side of the issue between him and his Ḳaraite opponents. More than once he took occasion to emphasize the uninterrupted continuity of traditional Judaism.[391] For example, he contends that the system of the calendar, as observed in his days, was of immemorial antiquity, and that even in Biblical times months and festivals had been determined by calculation; a view considered untenable even by the majority of Rabbinical authors.[392]

[388] See Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2205.

[389] Comp. Steinschneider, *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden*, §§ 9, 18 (p. 24).

[390] As late as in the 12th century Abraham Ibn Daud wrote his סדר הקבלה with the avowed purpose of refuting the Ḳaraites; see Steinschneider, *ibidem*, p. 46.

[391] *E. g. Kitâb al-Amânât*, pp. 23 (Hebrew, ed. Slucki, p. 12), 127 (66); see especially Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia*, p. 147, n. 3.

[392] Comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 159, 270 f.; *idem*, in Hastings's *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics, s. v. Calendar*, p. 119.

Aside from casual discussions of the subject occurring in his different writings, there are two separate works on chronology attributable to Saadia. They are:

1. *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ* (כתאב אלתאריך), "Book of Chronology." Saadia is quoted as the author of a work under this title by Judah Ibn Bal'am, an eminent grammarian of the eleventh century, who reproduces a passage therefrom and points out an error. The same passage, with the error referred to by Ibn Bal'am, is found literally in an anonymous work on chronology bearing the same title, *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ*. It was therefore suggested with great propriety, that the latter is identical with the work quoted by Ibn Bal'am. In support of this identification it has been pointed out that the Arabic translations of the geographical names of the Bible, which occur in large numbers in the anonymous *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ*, agree with the renditions of the same names by Saadia in his Arabic version of the Bible. All doubts as to Saadia's authorship of the anonymous work have been finally dispelled by the recent discovery of a short fragment of the initial part of the work, which agrees verbally with the beginning of the anonymous text and contains besides the definite ascription to Saadia.[393]

The work is divided into seven parts (*'aḳsâm*), covering the history of the world from the Creation down to the author's time. The Bible and the later traditional literature serve as the main sources. The accounts reproduced from the Scriptures are occasionally interpreted in the light of Midrashic ideas. The last part, which is very short, shows changes and additions by a later author or copyist, who

[393] For all details here touched upon see the *Bibliography*, under *Chronology*, p. 353. With regard to the points of contact between the *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ* and other writings of Saadia (Bacher, *RÉJ.*, XXXII, 144) it should be noted that the reason for the longevity of the first generations (from Adam to Abraham) advanced by Saadia in the work before us (*MJC.*, II, 90, end of chapter 1) is found in greater detail also in the recently published Introduction of Saadia to his Commentary on the Psalms (Harkavy-*Festschrift*, Hebrew part, p. 143, lines 5-15; comp. *MWJ.*, VIII, 16); comp. also H. Spiegel, *Saadia al-Fajjûmî's arabische Danielversion*, Berlin, 1906, pp. 11 f., who adduces some parallels to passages in our work from Saadia's translation of Daniel.

mentions the years 944 (two years after Saadia's death), 1125, and 1159. The data of this chapter (on account of which Saadia's authorship was originally doubted) are greatly confused, owing to numerous copyist's errors in the text, especially in the numbers, which several scholars have tried to rectify.[394]

2. *Sēder Tannāīm we-'Amōrāīm* (סדר תנאים ואמוראים), "Chronology of the Teachers of the Mishnah and the Talmud." The discovery of fragments of such a work was announced as early as 1886, but they were not published. Possibly they are not part of a special work on chronology, but of some other work, as the "Introduction to the Talmud," or the *Sēfer ha-Galui*, the second chapter of which dealt with the redaction of the Mishnah and the Talmud.[395]

3. *Tōledōt Rabbēnū ha-Kādōsh* (תולדות רבנו הקדוש), "The Genealogy of R. Judah the Patriarch," the redactor of the Mishnah, which Saadia was asked to write while sojourning in Mosul. Only a few lines have been preserved.[396]

4. מגלת בני חשמוני, *i. e.*, "The Scroll of the Ḥasmoneans," translated by Saadia from the original Aramaic into Arabic. As is well known, the Scroll contains a detailed, partly legendary, account of the Maccabæan victory over Antiochus and his generals. Saadia, who in his *Sefer ha-Galui* refers three times to the Aramaic Scroll, considered it a work of the Ḥasmoneans themselves and hence important enough to warrant a translation into the vernacular. It is also most likely that, as Arabic was then more commonly understood by the Jews than Aramaic, the translation was intended to counteract the Ḳaraites, who had rejected the feast of Ḥanukkah as a Rabbanite invention.[396a]

[394] See Bacher, Steinschneider, and Marx, as referred to in the *Bibliography*, pp. 353 f.

[395] See above, note 357, and below, p. 270; *Bibliography*, p. 354, no. 2.

[396] Comp. above, note 107; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 91; *Bibliography*, p. 354, no. 3.

[396a] See Neubauer, *JQR.*, VI, 575. For further details see the *Bibliography*, below, p. 355.

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A Greek thinker enunciated the idea that doubt is the first step toward knowledge;[397] it is through scepticism, and the refusal to accept things as they present themselves, that we arrive at a better understanding of their causes and a fuller comprehension of the universe. This doctrine, now the common property of all philosophers, is characteristic of the pagan conception of the origin of truth. For the heathen there is no ready-made truth, no pre-arranged system of thought to be relied upon in our conduct, or in our interpretation of nature. The Platonic ideas and a few mathematical axioms to the contrary notwithstanding, all knowledge is the product of our own mind, the fruit of our observation and experience. God himself is not a given entity, not an *a priori* truth, but merely an inference, something to be found by a logical process of demonstration.

In striking contrast thereto is the doctrine of Judaism. God, to begin with the point mentioned last, is not an object of reasoning and argumentation; His existence is a matter of course, an absolute fact neither to be doubted nor proved. He, the Creator of the world, is the source of all knowledge, the fountain of all truth. He revealed himself to His people, and gave them an eternal law, which was to make them live in accordance with His will, and He continued to guide them through His prophets and inspired teachers.

In a system based on such principles there is no room for doubt or scepticism. If scepticism is the generator of philosophic truth, Judaism, as a positive religion, could never become the bearer and promulgator of such truth. In fact, Judaism is not a system of philosophy, but a moral theology. It is not a scientific doctrine based on and developed by speculative thought. Leaving aside the legalistic elements, it is the immediate expression of religious feeling and emotion. Nor did Judaism ever produce philosophers on its own soil. It is only because of recent assertions to the contrary, that it becomes necessary to emphasize again the

[397] Ἐστι δὲ τοῖς εὐπορῆσαι βουλομένοις προὔργου τὸ διαπορῆσαι καλῶς· ἡ γὰρ ὕστερον εὐπορία λύσις τῶν πρότερον ἀπορουμένων ἐστι (Aristotle, Metaphysics, B, ch. 1, p. 995*a*, 27–29 of Berlin edition).

accepted fact, that the comparatively few Jewish authors who have become known as philosophers were all inspired by foreign thought. Some of the devotees of the Torah who had imbibed the foreign spirit were alive to the contrast between the Jewish and the heathen conception of God and the universe, and they held on to both in order to keep themselves from slipping between the two stools. The whole of Jewish philosophy was a product of the *Galūt,* and not indigenous Oriental Judaism. At the first collision between Jew and Greek on other than Palestinian soil, Philo the Alexandrian made a great effort to fuse the two opposing cultures into one. The artificial union was of comparatively short duration, and its effect on the subsequent development of the synagogue was of slight importance, except, perhaps, insofar as the Christian church may be considered an outgrowth thereof. For several centuries during the post-Alexandrian period, one looks in vain for a philosopher among Jewish scholars until, under the dominion of the Arabs in the Orient, Hebrew culture for the second time collided with Greek philosophy in the garb of Muhammedan literature. This encounter soon played sad havoc in the ranks of Oriental Jewry. The belief in the divine origin of the Torah was shaken, and the people took up with all sorts of religious vagaries then rampant in the Orient. Saadia was the first to enter into the breach. With his uncommon intellectual power and his vast knowledge of both Jewish and secular literature, he set up a comprehensive system of religious philosophy, culminating in the proof of the superiority of Judaism as compared not only with other religious systems, but also with the various doctrines of the philosophers, and of the compatibility of Jewish tenets with the dictates of reason. Saadia was, indeed, the first Jewish philosopher fully conscious of the basic difference between the Jewish and the philosophic conceptions of truth, and he gave especial emphasis to the fact that Judaism is primarily and essentially a religion based on historical experience; philosophic reflection being required only for the purpose of furnishing secondary evidence of the genuineness and worth

of its manifold teachings.[398] And this constitutes his undying greatness.

As a linguist, a Talmudist, a liturgist, he has been greatly surpassed by many of those who followed in the paths he opened. But as a systematizer and scientific expounder of the entire range of Jewish lore, as the builder of the most complete system of Jewish religious philosophy, he has been equalled by Maimonides alone. Even Maimonides, superior though he is to Saadia in many respects, owed many of the basic ideas in his philosophic doctrines to the works of the Gaon,[399] though, following the literary methods of the Middle Ages, he never quotes them as his source.

The appreciation of Saadia as a master of philosophy should not be based merely on those of his writings that are specially devoted to the subject, but on the general trend of his works in all other branches of Jewish literature as well. Apart from the numerous philosophic ideas and expositions we meet with in most of his existing writings[400]— and doubtless there were many more in his lost works, especially in his elaborate commentaries on the Bible[401]— the philosophic spirit of the author manifests itself in the method and the

[398] This view is clearly stated by Saadia in his Introduction to the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* pp. 22-26, *Emūnōt,* ed. Slucki, Leipzig, 1864, pp. 11-13.

[399] This has been explicitly stated by Abarbanel, מפעלות אלהים, IX, ch. 1, beginning: שכמה מדברי הגאון וטענותיו ימצאו . . . בפרקי המורה עם היות שלא זכרם הרב בשמו. A full account of Saadia's influence on Maimonides in all fields of his literary activity, including Halakah, requires a monograph. Respecting Maimonides's indebtedness to Saadia in the field of philosophy see Guttmann, in the Israel Lewy-*Festschrift,* Breslau, 1911, pp. 308-326 (also in *Moses Ben Maimon,* II, 202); comp. below, notes 416, 446, 578.

[400] *E. g.* his Introductions to the "Book on Inheritance" (*Oeuvres,* IX, 1-8), the translation of the Pentateuch (*Oeuvres, I*) the Commentaries on Job, Proverbs (*Oeuvres,* V, VI), and the Psalms (Harkavy-*Festschrift,* pp. 138-152), as well as numerous philosophic disquisitions embodied by the Gaon in the respective commentaries themselves; comp. in particular the Commentary on *Proverbs,* pp. 183-203.

[401] See the extracts from Saadia's lost Commentary on the Pentateuch in Judah b. Barzillai's *Commentary* on the *Sefer Yezirah,* ed. Halberstam, pp. 89-92, 197.

form of nearly everything he has written. This is what the student recognizes as the peculiar Saadianic characteristic. In the following exposition, however, we shall devote our attention more particularly to those works of the Gaon which come properly under the head of philosophy.

1. *Tafsîr Kitâb al-Mabâdî* (תפסיר כתאב אלמבאדי), "Commentary on the Book of Creation"[402] written in the year 931, soon after the struggle between Saadia and the Exilarch David b. Zakkai broke out. Saadia is the first known[403] commentator of this mysterious work, the most puzzling literary production in existence. It might at first seem surprising that a rationalist like Saadia, with his pronounced aversion to all kinds of occult science, should have taken the trouble of commenting upon such a mystical document.[404] It becomes understandable when we reflect that in the time of Saadia this work had not yet been divested

[402] Regarding the title see Steinschneider, *Hebräische Übersetzungen*, p. 443, n. 513. The date of composition is derived from a passage in the Commentary (ed. Lambert, p. 52, bottom; French text, p. 76, n. 1); comp. Harkavy, *JQR.*, XII, 539. The passage is reproduced also in a Hebrew translation in Judah b. Barzillai's פרוש ספר יצירה, p. 214, l. 13 (see the *Bibliography*, pp. 355 ff.), where the date רמ"ז = 936 must be corrected to רמ"ב, as it is in the Arabic original, not רמ"ד, as suggested by Halberstam in his note *ad locum*, p. 325 (Steinschneider, *l. c.*, n. 517); comp. note 293 and below p. 185. For all further details see the *Bibliography*, pp. 355-359.

[403] The book had been commented upon prior to Saadia, as he quotes in his Commentary (pp. 81 f., see below, note 576) some other interpreter, against whose interpretation he argues. No older commentary, however, is known, as that of Isaac Israëli does not exist in its original form, only some portions of it having been embodied in the Commentary of his pupil Dûnâsh Ibn Tamîm (London, 1902). It is possible that the interpreter quoted by Saadia is indeed Israëli, for another passage, quoted on p. 42 (ll. 8 ff.), is found in Dûnâsh's Commentary (p. 22) in the name of Israëli. Regarding the complicated question of the authorship of that Commentary see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 44, no. 15; comp. above, p. 48.

[404] Against the explanation of Guttmann (*Saadia*, pp. 26, 49) see the correct remarks of Lambert, p. viii, who, however, goes too far in asserting that Saadia had acquired all his knowledge of philosophy in Egypt. Lambert was not yet aware of the more recently ascertained fact that Saadia left Egypt when about 23 years old [see *Postscript*].

of its original character as a philosophic attempt to explain the process of the world's generation by the will of the Creator. It still had a claim upon the earnest attention of the scholar. Moreover, Saadia seems to have had his misgivings as to the real value of the book and the acceptability of its teachings. He expresses himself very cautiously about the authorship of the work, saying that the general belief which ascribes it to the patriarch Abraham can only be sustained insofar as the ideas contained therein are concerned, while in its literary form it is the product of scholars who lived in Palestine. To support his view he points to the Mishnah, which existed in oral tradition for many centuries before it was put into writing. Even a part of the Bible (Proverbs 25, 1 ff), he continues, went through the same process.[405] It is characteristic of Saadia's attitude toward the book that he does not accept what he presents as its basic theory of creation. He substitutes another theory, which, he says, is that of the Torah,[406] a rather surprising attitude in view of the circumstance that the theory of the *Sēfer Yeẓirāh* is supposed to have been taught by the patriarch Abraham. He also realizes that the text had been much tampered with, and cannot always be taken as a safe guide. He makes many emendations,[407] and " to prevent further alterations and misinterpretations " [408] gives the Hebrew text in full, with a verbal Arabic translation (*tafsîr*). This is followed by a lengthy commentary (*sharḥ*). The Hebrew text he divides into eight chapters, of which the first four are subdivided into twenty-four paragraphs (*halakōt*), while the latter four, which he considers merely as a more detailed repetition and development of the former,[409] are given with-

[405] *Tafsir,* p. 12, French translation, p. 28 (in the following notes the references to the French translation will be indicated by figures in parentheses); comp. Jellinek, *Beiträge zur Gesch. der Kabbala,* I, 5. The same view as regards parts of the Bible he expresses in his Commentary on Proverbs, 25, 1; comp. Steinschneider, *Hebräische Übersetzungen,* p. 443, n. 515.

[406] *Tafsir,* pp. 11 (27), 91 (113), l. 7; comp. below, p. 182, top.

[407] See *Tafsir,* pp. 26, l. 9; 50, 3-9; 80, 14; 102, 8.

[408] *Tafsir,* p. 13 (29), end of the Introduction.

[409] *Tafsir,* p. 89 (112), ll. 17 ff.

out further division and without the *tafsir*. The Commentary on this portion of the book, too, is comparatively brief, occupying about the tenth part of the whole (exclusive of the Introduction). In his introductory remarks to this part of the work, at the end of the fourth chapter (p. 98, bottom) he states that the Commentary on the following chapters will be limited to the explanation of rare words and the elucidation of new matter.

Whether or not Saadia succeeded in unravelling the mysteries of the *Sefer Yeṣirah*—let it be said distinctly that he did not—is not a matter of much concern. The Commentary, such as it is, is a valuable specimen of the early attempts to explain the book. It contains, however, a wealth of material of special importance for the appreciation of Saadia's achievements in various fields of knowledge, more particularly in those of Hebrew grammar and religious philosophy. A detailed account of Saadia's detached theories on these subjects, as they occur in this Commentary, is out of the question here. It would require the reproduction of a considerable portion of the book. Nor is this the place for a discussion of the doctrines of the *Sefer Yeṣirah* itself as presented by Saadia. A brief summary of the philosophic problems presented, and of some other literary and historical questions dealt with by the author in connection with his explanations of the text, will suffice to show the general character and literary significance of his Commentary.

We have seen that it was Saadia's scientific method to introduce his works, whether they were of an independent nature or in the form of commentaries, by a general outline of the subject under consideration, or by an analysis of the content, scope and purpose of the book to be commented upon.[410] The same method is adhered to in the Commentary on the *Sefer Yeṣirah*. A lengthy Introduction, occupying twelve pages of the Arabic text, begins with the brief statement, that the book is generally ascribed to Abraham the patriarch. After a short praise of God, cus-

[410] See in particular the Introductions to Job, Proverbs, and Psalms.

tomary in Arabic[411] works, he points out that the most difficult problem that has troubled the mind of thinkers among all nations is the origin of the universe. Even the author of a Biblical book, King Solomon, had to admit that his reasoning did not avail him to solve this problem (Kohelet, 7, 24). Nevertheless it is not permissible to abandon the study of this question, for "philosophy is one of the noblest creations of God," and Scripture recognizes in philosophy, so to speak, one of the occupations of the Creator himself,[412] when it says (Job, 12, 22): "He discovereth deep things out of darkness and bringeth out to light things obscure."

Having thus prepared the way for a philosophic investigation, he gives an historical account of the various Greek theories of the origin of the world, and refutes them one by one. It is Saadia's habit, observable in all his works, not to mention the names of authors whose views he opposes,[412a] a custom departed from in but a few rare instances. He follows here his common practice. The theories he discusses are, however, readily traceable to their respective authors. The first, affirming the eternity of the world, is that of the so-called *Dahriyya* (Eternalists), which differs from that of Aristotle insofar as it eliminates the idea of a prime mover[412b]; the second, which he subdivides into three somewhat similar branches, seems to be a combination

[411] The prayer is always followed by the formula אמא בער, which introduces the subject proper; in Hebrew works under Arabic influence usually אחר הישבה לאל, or, as in the *Emunōt,* beginning: ואחר מה שפתחנו בו; see the numerous instances collected by Steinschneider, *HB.,* X, 98, n. 3; XII, 57, n. 1. The Arabs consider the formula very important and credit David with its invention; see Steinschneider, *Vorlesungen über die Kunde hebräischer Handschriften,* p. 35.

[412] Comp. Guttmann, *Saadia,* p. 48, n. 3. Saadia's theory reminds one of the dictum of K. F. Gauss, the great German mathematician: *ὁ Θεὸς μαθηματίζει.*

[412a] Saadia says this explicitly in his *'Agron,* Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 51.

[412b] Comp. Horovitz, Cohen's *Festschrift,* p. 243, n. 1; below, note 475.

of the doctrines of Plato and of the Greek atomists Leucippus (500 b. c. e.) and Democritus (460); the fourth, which postulates water as the prime matter, is the theory of the oldest known Greek philosopher, Thales of Miletus (640); while the fifth and the sixth theories, the one considering the element of air and the other that of fire as the prime matter, are those of Anaximenes (550) and Heraclitus (500) respectively. To these is added, as the seventh theory, the teaching of Pythagoras (586-506), that all existence originates through numbers.

It is obvious that Saadia did not follow chronology in thus disposing of the Greek thinkers. He seems to have arranged the theories in the order of his valuation of them, putting the least probable first, and proceeding by degrees to the most plausible. This will explain why he interrupted the order by inserting in the third place a theory which he evidently attributes to some unnamed Jewish authors, who maintain that the world was created, but, basing their inference upon an erroneous interpretation of a Mishnah (*Ḥagigah,* II, 1), forbid the study of how and by what means the creation was effected. Naturally, such restriction of the right to philosophize did not appeal to Saadia, and he put the theory where he thought it belonged.[413]

Having rejected, as to the origin of the universe, the seven views cited, Saadia turns to the theory of the *Sefer Yeṣirah,* which, according to him, differs from that of Pythagoras only insofar as, in addition to the ten numerals, it postulates also the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet as the creative mechanism and the essence of all creation. Saadia devotes much space here and elsewhere in his Commentary to the elucidation of this fantastic theory, which, together with that of Pythagoras, he endeavors to harmonize with the teachings of Judaism. The author of the *Sefer Yeṣirah,* he asserts,[414] did not mean to say that the numbers and letters pre-existed as separate entities, out of which the world was created, but only that they constituted an impor-

[413] For further discussion of the subject see below, pp. 202-204.
[414] *Tafsir,* p. 10 (26, top), ll. 15 f.

tant factor in the process of the world's formation as the underlying principles of order and symmetry in all nature.

But Saadia does not accept all the views of the *Sefer Yeẓirah*.[415] According to him there was no gradual process of formation such as described in that work, but, "as taught in the Book of Genesis, the four elements, fire, air, water, and earth, with all their compositions, combinations, and formations, were created by God (*ex nihilo*) at one stroke, just as the flesh, bones, veins, skin, and all that forms itself thereof originate all at once in the embryo; the pulp, kernel, peel, stalk, and other components begin simultaneously in the fruit, and the elements of fire, redness, brilliancy, and ignition, appear all at the same time in the flame." [416]

Here the Introduction ends, but before taking up the text for interpretation the commentator discusses the question of Abraham's authorship. In this connection we receive historically important information about the differences between the Babylonian and Palestinian Jews in naming the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and in the pronunciation of the *resh*.[417] It is on the basis of these observations in the text of the *Sefer Yeẓirah* that Saadia assigns it to a Palestinian author.

Among the points of interest discussed in the Commentary proper the following may briefly be sketched.

[415] To minimize the importance of the theory of the *Sefer Yeẓirah*, as one advanced by Abraham, Saadia declares (*Tafsir*, p. 17 (35), bottom) that Abraham did not assert it as a positive truth, but merely suggested it as an idea that appealed to his imagination; comp. *Tafsir*, p. 12 (28), ll. 17 ff.

[416] *Tafsir*, p. 12 (27). It is interesting to note that Saadia quotes this passage from his Commentary on *Genesis*, now lost (comp. the *Bibliography*, p. 308). The question of the correctness of these illustrations from the viewpoint of modern science does not concern us. Saadia expresses the same view in the *'Amânât*, p. 88, ll. 17 ff. (*Em.*, p. 46). In both places he bases it on Is. 48. 13, as interpreted in the Talmud (*Ḥagigah*, 12*a*). Here again Maimonides (*Dalâlat*, II, ch. 30; Munk, *Guide*, II, p. 234) follows Saadia, without referring to his source; comp. Guttmann, in Isr. Lewy's *Festschrift*, p. 322 (*Moses ben Maimon*, II, 212); above, note 399; below, notes 446, 515, 541*a*.

[417] Comp. Derenbourg, *Manuel du lecteur* (*Journal Asiatique*, 1870), p. 459, n. 1; 496; Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, II, 158 ff.; Bacher, *Anfänge*, pp. 22 f.

CHAPTER I (pp. 13-36). A lengthy discussion in which the distinction is drawn between things knowable and therefore to be studied with zeal, as, for instance, the content and meaning of the religious law, and things unknowable, as the laws of nature. "For if you ask the wisest among men why does fire tend upward and water downward, or why is the element of air in motion and that of the earth stable, he will not be able to say more than that they were so created and that this is their nature"[418]— as satisfactory a reply as the modern scientist makes when he refers a questioner dogmatically to the laws of "gravitation" or of "chemical affinity."

The author of the *Sefer Yeṣirah,* Saadia continues, who seems to have gone much farther in presenting his solutions of nature's mysteries, in reality did not pretend to know what is unknowable, but merely suggested that the numbers and letters may have been the instruments of creation, just as we believe in a *creatio ex nihilo,* though we have never witnessed anything coming out of nothing.[419]

Saadia's efforts to blend Judaism with Greek philosophy are characteristically illustrated in his interpretation of ten divine names used in the *Sefer Yeṣirah* and even of the Ten Commandments as indicative of the ten categories of Aristotle.[420] Needless to say, he turns many an exegetical somersault in order to accomplish his purpose. A little further on (p. 22) he attributes in the name of "scholars" a fourfold existence to all things: in reality, in speech, in writing, and

[418] *Tafsir,* p. 15 (32), ll. 15 ff. The same occurs, at still greater length, in Saadia's Commentary on *Proverbs,* 30, 3-4; comp. also Commentary on *Job,* 28, 28, and Bacher's note to that passage. The passage is quoted by Eliezer b. Nathan (see the references below, *note* 623) and Judah b. Barzillai, פס"י p. 155 (comp. also p. 275) from the Commentary on Proverbs, not from that on the *Sefer Yeṣirah,* as assumed by Kaufmann in his note *ad locum,* p. 339.

[419] *Tafsir,* p. 17 (35); comp. note 415.

[420] *Tafsir,* pp. 18-22 (36-42). Part of this exposition is quoted by Berechiah ha-Naḳdan, מצרף, pp. 118 f. (comp. the *Bibliography,* p. 358); comp. Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 276-278.

in thought. For this idea I do not know the source.[421] In connection with the alliterative passage *sēfer, sefār, sippūr* (beginning of *Sefer Yeṣirah*), he points to similar alliterations in Bible (Isaiah, 24, 17), Talmud (Erubin, 65*b*, top: בכיסו בכוסו בכעסו); Eleazar Ḳalir's liturgy (*Kerōbōt* to the second day of Tabernacles: לסוככי למוסכי להסיכי בנסיכת קדוש), and in the style of Hebrew letters prevalent in his own time, of which he quotes several examples.[422]

Other points in this chapter worth mentioning are: Saadia's correct explanation of the meaning of the dragon in astronomy,[423] and his accurate description of the inequality in length of days and nights in different parts of the world, which ultimately results in some countries having continuous day or night for a period of six months.[424]

Chapter 2 (pp. 36-55). The lengthy discussion of the consonants and vowels of the Hebrew alphabet and their pronunciation by the Tiberians and Babylonians (pp. 42-46), which is of great importance for the history of Hebrew grammar, has been fully treated by competent scholars [425] and may therefore be passed over. Among the points of interest in this chapter we note Saadia's contention that the earth is round, inclosed on all sides by the heavens, in opposition to the author of the *Sefer Yeṣirah,* who considers it flat, covered only on one side by the heavens "as the roof covers the house." [426] The endless diversity in the physical properties of organic and inorganic bodies Saadia explains, like Aristotle, as the result of different combinations of the primary

[421] The idea is repeated in *Tafsir,* p. 44 (67), ll. 15 ff.; comp. Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 230, l. 9 from below; 278, ll. 29 ff.

[422] *Tafsir,* p. 23; comp. Lambert's translation, p. 43, n. 7; Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 24; Steinschneider, *Kerem Chemed,* IX, 40; Harkavy, *Zikron, V,* 110; comp. J. N. Epstein (above, note 360), p. 45.

[423] *Tafsir,* p. 32 (52 f.), quoted also by Judah b. Barzillai, p. 209; comp. Kaufmann, *ad locum,* p. 345.

[424] *Tafsir,* p. 33 (54); comp. Lambert's Introduction, p. x.

[425] Bacher, *Anfänge,* pp. 38-62.

[426] *Tafsir,* p. 48 (71), ll. 13 ff.; comp. Lambert, Introduction, p. x.

elements which constitute the bodies.[427] In illustration thereof he points to the new meanings always arising from the permutation of letters in a word, or the transposition of words within given sentences. Drifting into the field of astrology (in which Saadia, in spite of his pronounced rationalism, probably believed to some extent) he illustrates the same idea by showing the varying influences of the stars on human actions in accordance with their position in the zodiac.[428] For the computation of the planetary motions he uses as a starting point the day on which he was writing, so that we learn incidentally the date of the work. It was Tuesday, the twelfth of Sivan, 1242 *era contractuum* = May 31, 931, c. e.[429]

CHAPTER 3 (pp. 55-69). Numbers and letters occupying so prominent a position in the "Book of Creation," Saadia again and again takes occasion to discuss their qualities and significance from various points of view. The number "One" is extolled as the most important of all, being the origin of all numbers with their infinite potentialities and preceded by none, resembling in this respect the Creator of the universe.[430] The difficulties of the text often lead Saadia to very curious conceits. The letter ש with its three arms rising from the base, symbolizes to him the upward striving element of fire; the מ with its two sides dropping down, represents the water; and the א with outspread wings the

[427] *Tafsir,* p. 51 (73 f.); Lambert, p. x. In a similar way he explains elsewhere in this work (p. 60, top) the causes of the differentiation between male and female; comp. Lambert, p. 82; Judah b. Barzillai, p. 222, top.

[428] *Tafsir,* p. 53 (76 f.); Judah b. Barzillai, p. 214.

[429] See above, note 402. It may here be added that nearly all of the second chapter is reproduced in a Hebrew translation in the פס"ו of Judah b. Barzillai (see the *Bibliography,* pp. 356 f.), but the text is very corrupt.

[430] *Tafsir,* p. 56 (79), l. 4 from below; Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 260 f. On p. 27 (48, top), ll. 11 ff., Saadia restricts this statement to the effect that numbers, like time, are infinite only in comparison with ourselves, but not when compared to God. Another paragraph is devoted to the glorification of the number One; *Tafsir,* p. 68 (89 f.); comp. Steinschneider, *Bibliotheca Mathematica,* 1895, pp. 23 f.

air.[431] A lengthy discussion on the permutations of letters[432] shows their endless progression with the increasing number of letters added to a word, so that the longest word occurring in the Bible and counting only eleven letters (והאחשדרפנים, Esther, 9, 3), permits of 39,916,800 combinations! He concludes this discussion with the following interesting remarks: "In similar proportions increases the gain of him who searches after knowledge. Each time he learns a point he derives therefrom another one, just as the profit of the merchant increases each time he adds something to the capital. Nay, even more; the profit gained by study can always be added to the capital, while the profit of capital engaged in business in the beginning is spent so that it disappears, wherefore Scripture (Prov. 3, 14) says: The merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

The Commentary on the "Book of Creation" is, so far as I know, the only extant work of Saadia in which he touches also upon the ancient idea of the parallelism existing between the universe as a macrocosm and man as a microcosm[433]; an idea which, as I have shown elsewhere, has its origin in old Babylonian literature.[434] Following a Midrash,[435] Saadia interposes between these two worlds an intermediary world, which is represented by the Holy Tabernacle. He refers the reader to his "commentary on the construction of the Tabernacle," in which he draws eighteen parallelisms among the three worlds.[436] Here only two are given: to

[431] *Tafsir,* p. 59 (82); Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 221 f.; comp. also *Tafsir,* p. 91 (113, bottom).

[432] *Tafsir,* pp. 62-64 (83-85); Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 244 ff. Judah (p. 243, bottom) quotes some other words of the Bible as the longest. Ibn Ganâh, *Kitâb al-Luma',* p. 29 (רקמה, p. 7) uses Saadia, as usual, without name.

[433] *Tafsir,* pp, 67 f. (89); comp. also p. 91 (113 f.), end of chapter 4.

[434] Comp. Malter, *Personifications of Soul and Body, JQR., N. S.,* vol. II (1911-1912), pp. 453 ff.

[435] See Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch,* III, 175 f.

[436] Quoted by Abraham Ibn Ezra, on *Exodus,* 25, 40; see also his *Short Commentary* on *Exodus,* 25, 7 (Geiger, *Wissenschaftliche*

the two celestial lights (sun and moon) correspond the two eyes in man and the lamps in the candlestick of the Tabernacle; the firmament which divided the water under it from the water above it (Genesis, 1, 7) is paralleled by the veil which divided between the holy and most holy place in the Tabernacle (Exodus, 26, 33) and by the diaphragm,[437] which separates the organs of nutrition from those of respiration in man.

CHAPTER 4 (pp. 69-92). Most of this chapter is devoted to the explanation of the theory of creation supposed to be propounded by the *Sefer Yeẓirah*.[438] The believers, Saadia begins, use various terms in trying to describe the process of creation. They say, God created the world by his "breath," "spirit" (רוח), "word" (דבר), "power," "will," "desire," and the like. But all these terms have one and the same meaning. The author of our book uses "breath," which is used also in Scripture (Job, 26, 13), "by his breath the heavens are garnished." When the breath, or spirit, is conceived as having assumed actual form, it is called "word." Thus Scripture says (Psalms, 33, 6), "by the word of God were the heavens made; and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth." When the letters of a word are spoken into the air, they shape themselves into substantial entities. Through the vibration of the air they then reach the ear of the listener. The word of God, being infinitely more effective, at once carried creation with it. He said and it was.

According to Saadia's interpretation of the *Sefer Yeẓirah* the first thing God created was a certain intangible, rarefied,

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Zeitschrift, V, 299); another author (see Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2207) quotes 16 instead of 18, see the *Bibliography*, p. 312. For more particulars on this subject see A. Epstein, *RÉJ.*, XXI (1890), 92-97; XXII, 1-4; Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, VII, 117; Malter, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. II (1911-1912), p. 479, n. 99.

[437] Saadia uses here the Greek word (דייפרגמא = διάφραγμα), hence also the translator Moses of Lucena; see Steinschneider, *Hebräische Übersetzungen*, p. 448, and Epstein, *l. c.*, XXI, p. 93, n. 4.

[438] The first two paragraphs of this chapter (69-74) are given also by Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 177-179, and partly by Moses Tachau, *Ozar Nechmad*, II, 66 f. (see below, pp. 281 ff., 358).

pneumatic or ethereal substances,[439] which differs from the tangible air that surrounds us by its greater tenuity and sublimated quality. The next step was the creation of the atmospheric air. At this stage the alphabet, or rather the words of God formed therefrom, became the active instruments of creation, the air serving as the medium for the transmission of God's will.

As pointed out before (pp. 178, 182), Saadia does not accept this theory in full. According to him there were no prior and posterior stages in the process of creation, but all sprang into potential existence at once, and the Biblical account of a six days' duration refers only to the gradual development into reality. But he seems to have admitted the differentiation between the ethereal substance and the atmospheric air, which he imputes to the author of the *Sefer Yeẓirah*. He expatiates considerably upon the subject, and in connection therewith endeavors to prove also the omnipresence of God and to show God's relation to the universe.[440] The pneumatic substance, or

[439] Saadia uses various terms to designate this substance, as *peculiar, simple, subtle, second, air.*

[440] Lambert, p. vii, contends that Saadia had given up this theory when writing the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* or had never recognized it. "Dans son traité de théologie, Saadya ne parle plus de cette théorie. Là il cherche à prouver la création et son corollaire, l'existence de Dieu, mais il ne tente plus d'exposer les relations de Dieu et du monde." Probably following Lambert, S. Horovitz, *Über den Einfluss der griechischen Philosophie auf die Entwicklung des Kalam,* Breslau, 1909, p. 43, likewise asserts that there is no trace of that theory in Saadia's main philosophic work. Both Lambert and Horovitz, however, overlooked or misunderstood the parallel passages, *'Amânât,* pp. 88, 91 (*Emūnōt,* Leipzig, 1864, pp. 46, 48), especially p. 108, ll. 1-8 (*Emūnōt,* p. 55, ll. 32 ff.; *Tafsir,* p. 71) which, though not so explicit as in the *Tafsir,* are nevertheless based on the same theory, and can only be understood in the light thereof; comp. *'Amânât,* p. 88, ll. 12 ff., and *Tafsir,* p. 70, top (Lambert's translation, p. 91, is here incomplete); *'Amânât,* p. 88, l. 3, and *Tafsir,* p. 72 (94), l. 11, and especially *'Amânât,* p. 91, ll. 17 ff., and *Tafsir,* p. 73 (95, bottom), ll. 9 f. (the text, l. 11, gives no sense, for ואנמא לם יגעל is probably to be read ואנמא גּעל). Guttmann (Saadia, pp. 119, 127) correctly recognized the connection between the two works, but failed to see that the passage, *Emūnōt,* p. 48, is likewise part of the theory that

ether, which he probably adopted from the Stoics,[441] pervades all existence, even the interior of the most solid bodies. It is through the medium of this sublimated air that God is omnipresent; it is, figuratively speaking, "the throne of God's majesty,"[442] the agency of the divine spirit that animates and sustains all creation. Scripture therefore says (Psalms, 103, 19), "God hath established His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all." In this sense Jerusalem,[443] the city from which God sent His messages to the world, is called "the throne of God" (Jeremiah, 3, 17). The same all-pervading ethereal substance is often designated in Scriptures by the name *Kabod*, "glory," as it is said (Isaiah, 6, 3), "the whole earth is full of His glory." It is by means of this "finer air" that the word of God was communicated to the prophets, and that all the miraculous phenomena became visible to their eyes. The Jewish nation later coined the special term *Shekinah* (שכינה), which also designates this imperceptible medium of power, the subtle air, charged, as it were, with divinity, in contradistinction to the perceptible atmospheric air, which serves as a vehicle for its manifestations. Even after the cessation of prophecy, the divine spirit continued to manifest itself, though in a lesser degree, to the sages of the nation. During this period the imperceptible substance, which thus establishes the relation between God and the pious ones, is called "the Holy Spirit" (רוח הקדש), or "Echo" (בת קול), that is, the resonance of God's voice.[444]

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attributes to the air or ether a high degree of divinity. Hence Guttmann's efforts (pp. 113 f.) to explain the reason why Saadia discussed the matter in that place.

[441] Comp. Horovitz, Über den Einfluss, etc., p. 42; Goldziher, *REJ.*, XLII, 184.

[442] Comp. *'Amânât*, pp. 99 f., 102, 104, 106 (*Emūnōt*, pp. 51, 52, bottom, 53, 55).

[443] Arabic *al-Ḳuds* (*Tafsir*, p. 73, top), which is the name of Jerusalem, misunderstood by Lambert, p. 95, who translates *sanctuaire;* comp. *'Amânât*, p. 143 (73).

[444] *Tafsir*, p. 73 (95).

The foregoing glorification of the imperceptible air as the omnipresent divine spirit might easily lead to grave misunderstanding. For in spite of Saadia's cautious remark that the imperceptible air itself was created, and that his theory is only to be taken as a metaphoric presentation of the idea of God's omnipresence, the doctrine borders dangerously on pantheism. Saadia is well aware of this danger, and therefore endeavors to save the personality of God as a distinct entity, in no way immersed in the universe. In order to reach some approximate idea of God's relation to the world, he says,[445] we must, in the first place, compare His presence in the universe with the presence of life in the animal or human body. Just as there is life in every particle of the body, so God is in every atom of the universe. He is therefore described in the Bible (Daniel, 12, 7) as the *life of the world* (חי העולם).[446] We then proceed a step farther and conceive God as the life-governing principle, which in the human body is the intellect. God thus becomes "the intellect of the world." The imperceptible air, of which we spoke, is the vitality of the entire cosmos, permeating and vivifying all its parts, just as life permeates the living organism. But above this vitality stands a spiritual power which controls its actions and gives it direction, as is obviously the case in the life of the individual. We may draw further comparisons and say, that just as the human intellect is not divided by the division of the body and does not perish with it, so God, the intellect of the world, is not affected by the divisibility of the latter, and does not cease to exist, though it should disappear. Moreover, as the intellect, though pervading every spark of life, its next substratum, is nevertheless distinctly above it, so that life is actually guided by intellect,

[445] *Tafsir,* p. 70 (91, bottom), ll. 4 ff.

[446] This interpretation of the verse as well as the philosophic idea underlying it, without making use, however, of the air as a medium, were taken over by Maimonides, *Dalâlat,* I, chaps. 69, 72 (Munk, *Guide,* I, 321, 371), who does not mention, however, his source; see above, notes 399, 416, and below, notes 450, 472*a*, 473, 494, 515, 541*a*, 578.

similarly God—though present in all parts of nature by means of the imperceptible air, His immediate agency—is nevertheless the extra-mundane guiding spirit of all. Finally, as the intellect is not defiled by the uncleanness and other imperfections of the body, so the Creator is untouched by the soilure and impurities of the world.[447]

It may be surprising, but it is nevertheless true, that if Saadia's presentation and solution of this most important problem be stripped of its Oriental floridity and ornateness, the doctrine here propounded will be found to be much the same as that of the German philosopher Schopenhauer. The imperceptible air is but an expression for the dynamic energy active in all organic and inorganic nature, constantly producing and reproducing life—in the phraseology of Schopenhauer, the *will to live*. The difference between Saadia and Schopenhauer is not in the definition and conception of the power in question, but only as regards its origin. According to Saadia the will—and it should here be added that Saadia uses this term (*mashi'ah, 'irâdah*) repeatedly [447a] to designate the imperceptible air—was implanted by God in nature for a special purpose, and its workings are everlastingly superintended and directed by Him. According to Schopenhauer the will is a blind, unconscious power, working to no purpose and gaining consciousness only in the higher stages of existence, where it becomes mind, as in man. The reason for this difference is obvious. The pious Gaon of Sura could not afford to lose his personal God. He fared better for it. For the Jewish sage could present his philosophy with a smile, while the German thinker was bound to plunge himself and his followers into a world of philosophic pessimism.

In keeping with the text of the *Sefer Yeṣirah* the philosophic exposition is here again interrupted to give place to a

[447] *Tafsir*, pp. 70-71 (92 f.); comp. Horovitz, *l. c.*, pp. 42 f., who adduces some parallels from Greek and other authors; Kaufmann, in his *Notes* on the פס"י of Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 340 f.

[447a] *Tafsir*, p. 69, ll. 16 f.; 70, ll. 2, 15.

lengthy paragraph (pp. 75-9) on Hebrew grammar and phonetics, which is of importance for the history of that science. Saadia refers twice to his main work on Hebrew grammar (*Kutub al-luġah*) and gives extracts therefrom, the more valuable as the book in its entirety is lost.[448]

In a following paragraph (pp. 80-84) Saadia shows himself to have been familiar with the astronomical literature of his time. He gives the various measurements of the planets and other stars as compared with the size of the earth. The circumference of the latter is given as being nearly 20,000 miles.[449] As the Arabic mile is about 300 meters longer than the English, the measure is about the same as that given by modern scientists, namely, 25,000 English miles. Saadia concludes that these measures were established by ancient scholars with the help of instruments and by mathematical computations.[450]

The last four chapters of the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (pp. 92-105), are treated summarily, Saadia limiting himself for the most part to the interpretation of difficult words and phrases. Some of these interpretations are forced and can hardly be accepted, although nothing better can be offered. There occur, however, numerous linguistic remarks of interest,[451] as also some references of importance. Thus Saadia's reference to a book dealing with the decorative "crowns" of certain letters in the Torah scrolls (ספר תגין), is the earliest

[448] This paragraph was published by Neubauer and later, with a Hebrew translation, by Harkavy, for which see the *Bibliography*, p. 356.

[449] *Tafsir*, p. 84 (107), l. 12; comp. Lambert, p. x.

[450] It is interesting to note that in Saadia's opinion (*Tafsir*, p. 83 (106), end of § 4) "the scholars properly choose mathematics and geometry as the first subjects of instruction, because they are the origin of all sciences." This view was also adopted by Maimonides *Dalâlat*, I, 34 (Munk, *Guide*, I, 321); comp. Malter, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. I (1910-1911), pp. 491, n. 138; 492, n. 143. The same view is expressed in the *Commentary* on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* attributed to Dûnâsh Ibn Tamîm, London, 1902, p. 16.

[451] So on p. 94 (115) (discussed by Derenbourg, *Manuel*, p. 139, n. 6); 97 (116), 102 (119).

known.[452] He speaks also of people who believe in the efficacy of amulets (קמעין), and suggests the origin of the belief.[453] In the sixth chapter he discusses in detail the functions of various internal organs of the human body, showing his acquaintance with Arabic works on the subject, to which he refers in another passage as "books of anatomy" (*kutub al-tashrîḥ*).[454]

2. *Kitâb al-'Amânât wa'l-I'tiḳâdât* (כתאב אלאמאנאת ואלאעתקאדאת, in Hebrew: ספר האמונות והדעות), "Book of Philosophic Doctrines and Religious Beliefs,"[455] Saadia's most important philosophic work, written in Bagdad during the time of his seclusion, in 933.[455a] The printed Arabic

[452] *Tafsir,* p. 94 (114). The book was published with a Latin Introduction by J. J. L. Bargès, Paris, 1866 (in an entirely different recension also in the מחזור ויטרי, pp. 674-685; comp. p. 800), preceded by a lengthy essay on the origin of the book by Senior Sachs; comp. Bargès, Introduction, pp. X f.; Schechter, *Abot di R. Nathan,* p. xi; Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 24; Steinschneider, *Hebräische Übersetzungen,* p. 443, n. 514; *Vorlesungen über die Kunde hebräischer Handschriften,* pp. 4 f. The book is also mentioned in an ancient list, *JQR.,* XIII, 55, no. 90; Wertheimer, לקט מדרשים, p. 13. None of the editors knew that the book was quoted by Saadia; see above, note 52.

[453] *Tafsir,* pp. 89 (111), 94 (114).

[454] *Tafsir,* p. 91 (114), l. 14; also in *'Amânât,* p. 201 (*Emūnōt,* pp. 100 f.); comp. below, *Bibliography,* VII, p. 398.

[455] The Hebrew title has been variously translated by recent authors and mostly mistranslated. The word אמונה usually means belief, faith, or creed. Ibn Tibbon, however, imitating the Arabic *'amânât,* used it in the sense of a philosophic doctrine, or *system* of belief; see Saadia's own definition, p. 11, ll. 4 f., *Emūnōt,* p. 6, l. 7, where, however, אמונה stands for *i'tikâd,* not *'amânah,* showing that Ibn Tibbon used the Hebrew term indiscriminately for both. See Steinschneider, *H. B.,* XI, p. 141, n. 3, end; XXI, 19; *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 439, n. 482.

[455a] The date of composition is derived from a passage in the work itself, p. 72, Hebrew, p. 37 (here and in the following quotations of the Hebrew text the edition of Slucki, Leipzig, 1864, is referred to). For the literature regarding the date see Landauer, p. v, and the numerous references given by Steinschneider, *l. c.,* p. 439, n. 483.

text covers 320 pages of the usual octavo size. The book seems to have originally been written and issued in separate monographs, later combined by the author into an organic whole preceded by a general Introduction. Traces of this development are still found in various parts of the book.[456] In its present form the work consists, apart from the long Introduction (pp. 1-30), of ten distinct *treatises* (*maḳâlât*), each bearing a special title, indicating the subject treated thereunder. The seventh treatise is still extant in two different recensions, the one probably forming the original monograph and the other being a recast thereof to suit the plan of the bigger work.[457] In the following analysis I shall refer to the individual treatises by the more general term of chapters.[458]

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

One of the main features of this great work of Saadia is its fundamental theory, that philosophy and religion not only do not contradict one another, but from the very start

[456] Thus several of the chapters are quoted in the work itself under their respective special titles, although this is not carried through with consistency; see *'Amânât*, pp. 55, top, 116, l. 13 (*Emūnōt*, pp. 29, 60): שער הצדק = באב אלעדל, *i. e.* chapter 4; *Am.*, p. 77, l. 10 (*Em.*, p. 41): שער החדוש = באב חדת אלעאלם (so read for the corrupt שער המדע), *i. e.* chapter 1; *Am.*, pp. 159, l. 9; 254, bottom (*Em.*, pp. 81, 129): מאמר = מקאלה (באב) אלתוחיד (שער) היחוד *i. e.* chapter 2; comp. Kaufmann, *Attributenlehre*, pp. 87, 146, and p. 504 *ad locum*, and below, *Bibliography*, section VI, p. 384, no. 4. The third chapter seems to have been known as a separate book under the title *Kitâb al-Sharâi'* (Book of Laws), see the *Bibliography*, section VII, pp. 400 f., while the tenth chapter is designated (*Am.*, p. 286, bottom, *Em.*, p. 147), as *Kitâb Zŭhd*, כתאב זהד = ספר פרישות, *i. e.* Book of Abstinence, Ethics, see below, note 530. In Hebrew too several of the chapters circulated as separate treatises (see below, p. 247, bottom, 267, and the *Bibliography*, pp. 362 f., nos. 1-2; 367, no. 4; 395, 401).

[457] See the *Bibliography*, p. 360.

[458] In the older Hebrew translation, the so-called *Paraphrase*, the individual treatises are called מגלה (see Zunz, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, 232), while Ibn Tibbon uses מאמר.

were destined to help and supplement each other in the finding and propagation of truth. For both reason and religion sprang from the same divine source; hence neither one, if properly used or interpreted, can teach anything that is incompatible with the teachings of the other. By religion Saadia naturally understands the faith revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai and later amplified and developed by the divinely inspired prophets of Israel.

With this theory as a basis Saadia sets out to examine the various philosophic doctrines which seem to be at variance with the teachings of the Mosaic religion, and endeavors to prove that the supposed antagonism between the two is due either to fallacious reasoning or to a misinterpretation of religious sources. It is therefore a matter of prime importance to find out the criteria by which we are to recognize the ways of sound reasoning, as well as to establish certain rules for the proper interpretation of the Biblical documents.

All our knowledge is commonly derived from three sources: 1. sense-perception; 2. direct cognition or apprehension of the mind (intuitive, or immediate knowledge); 3. syllogistic reasoning (inferential, or mediate knowledge).[458a] In addition to these three general sources of knowledge "we, the followers of monotheism," recognize also a fourth one, *i. e.*, the Bible. If, as often happens, the word of Scriptures appears to contradict what we had assumed as true on the basis of one or the other of the three general sources of truth, or even of all of them, it becomes our duty first to submit the assumed truth to a careful examination. For it may be found that it is based either on an imaginary experience or on false reasoning. If, upon conscientious revision, we still feel convinced that the Biblical word is in conflict with experience or reason, then we are not only entitled, but in duty bound, to interpret the Scriptural pas-

[458a] Regarding this important matter see Horovitz, *Die Psychologie*, etc., pp. 48 f., and in Hermann Cohen's *Festschrift* (*Judaica*), p. 251.

sage in question allegorically, so as to bring it into harmony with the accepted truth.[459]

The "Book of Doctrines and Beliefs," which is devoted entirely to this work of harmonization between reason and religion, thus assumes the character of philosophic hermeneutics. There is hardly a single thought in the whole book that is not viewed in the light of some Scriptural verse, which either confirms or refutes it. Even for our recognition of the senses and of reason as bearers of truth we get the authorization, as it were, from certain passages of the Bible.[460] The teachings of the Bible, though named by Saadia in the fourth place, are actually recognized by him as the first and most reliable source of truth. Thus, at the beginning of every paragraph in which some new point is to be discussed, he quotes a verse or verses in which, according to his opinion, the teaching of the Bible in the matter is clearly stated. Then the contrary opinions of various thinkers are taken up and considered from all sides, and finally it is proved that reason or experience or both come to the support of the Biblical view. At the end of the paragraph additional verses are quoted and interpreted in a way that makes them corroborate the original statement. It is astounding with what ingenuity hundreds of verses taken from all parts of Scripture, are made to bear on the remotest ideas and most subtle philosophic questions. Nearly thirteen hundred verses, approximately the number of verses in the Book of Isaiah, are thus interpreted. It is

[459] See *Am.*, p. 83, bottom, *Em.*, pp. 44: ובכלל אמר כל מה שימצא בספרים ובדבריו אנחנו המיחדים מלשון בספור בוראנו או מעשיו חולק על מה שמחיבו העיון האמתי בלי ספק שהוא דרך העברה מהלשון "In general I say: any description of God or of His actions occurring in the Scriptures or in the words of others among us, the monotheists, which is found to contradict what is demanded by sound reasoning, is undoubtedly a figure of speech." The same idea is expressed with more detail, p. 212 (109); (comp. Guttmann, *Saadia*, p. 221, n. 1), so also *Em.*, p. 133: וכל פרוש מסכים למה שיש בשכל הוא האמת וכל מה שמביא אל מה שהוא חולק בשכל הוא הבטל.

[460] Am., p. 14, ll. 6 ff.; *Em.*, pp. 7 f.

obvious that this work is of great importance also for the history of philosophic exegesis.

While Saadia is so profuse in the use of the Bible, he refrains conspicuously from bringing into play the vast treasures of traditional literature. In the whole book there are only twenty-nine direct quotations from the Mishnah and both Talmudim. Nearly all of them occur in the eschatological chapters, which deal with specifically Jewish problems.[461] The reason for this procedure is in all probability to be looked for in the fact that the book was intended to carry conviction not only to the adherents of traditional Judaism, but even more to those who antagonized it, as the Ḳaraites and other sectaries, whom the author so forcibly describes in the Introduction to the work. It should be noted, however, that many of Saadia's views, particularly in the eschatological chapters, are based entirely on passages in Talmud and Midrash, although he neither quotes nor refers to them.[462] For completeness' sake it may here be

[461] The same attitude toward the Talmud is observable in Saadia's Bible Commentaries, see Derenbourg, *MWJ.*, VII, 133. They too, like the *'Amânât,* were probably calculated to impress also those who did not believe in Jewish traditions; comp. notes 305, 470. In our work Saadia occasionally, as it were, excuses himself for not making more use of traditional literature, saying that the passages are so many that it would be impossible for him to discuss them; see *'Amânât,* chapter VII, in the edition of Bacher, Steinschneider-*Festschrift,* p. 109, top; *Emūnōt,* p. 114, further *'Am.,* p. 223, l. 5; *Em.,* p. 133. Aside from the 29 direct citations there are some instances in which Saadia merely states that the Rabbis expressed a certain view, without quoting a passage; see p. 175 (88), l. 14; 204 (102), ll. 15 f. (allusion to *b. 'Abōdah Zārāh, 20b*); see also the references above, note 324.

[462] The instances are too numerous to quote. For the sake of illustration I refer to *Am.,* p. 181, ll. 2-7, *Em.,* p. 91, ll. 2-5 (*Baba Ḳamma, 94b*); *Am.,* p. 214, ll. 7 ff., *Em.,* p. 114, ll. 4 ff. (*Synhedrin, 91b*); *Am.,* p. 278, *Em.,* p. 141 (*'Erūbin, 19a; Shabbat, 153a*); see also below, note 485. On the other hand Saadia at times tacitly opposes the Talmud, see *Am.,* p. 182 (91) the interpretation of *Exodus,* 20, 12, *Deuter., 22, 7,* as against *Ḳiddūshin, 39 b;* comp. below, notes 482, 518, 603.

added that he quotes once the Book of Sirach,[463] several times the Targum Onkelos,[464] and once refers to three old liturgical pieces [465] that are still recited on the Day of Atonement. Of his own works he mentions his commentaries on Genesis, Exodus, Job, and on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* and a "Refutation of Ḥiwi of Balkh." [466] No names are mentioned in the book, with the exception of those of Anan, the founder of Ḳaraism (once), and of the Ḳaraite Benjamin Nahâwandi (twice).[467]

The foregoing characterization of Saadia's method in the work under consideration brings out the fact that his original purpose in composing it was not to create a new and independent system of cosmic philosophy on the basis of the many Greek and Muhammedan doctrines he consulted, but to define the position of Judaism in the light of these doctrines and to demonstrate that it rests on much firmer ground than all other proposed solutions of the great world-problems. In pursuing this aim Saadia could not afford to bind himself to any of the existing philosophic systems in its entirety, but had to adopt from each one those elements which in his opinion were essential to Judaism and compatible with his understanding thereof. Whether an idea originated with Plato or Aristotle or in the mind of some Muhammedan thinker was immaterial, so long as it could stand the test of reason and experience, and was *ipso facto* consonant with the teachings of the Bible. Saadia's method in this work was thus that of an eclectic. This is not to be taken, however, in the technical sense of the term. For he did not

[463] *Am.,* p. 301 (153); comp. Guttman, *Saadia,* p. 274, n. 3; below, p. 252, no. 6, end.

[464] *Am.,* pp. 95, 178, 264 (50, 89, 134); comp. above, note 311.

[465] *Am.,* p. 179 (90); comp. Guttmann, *Saadia,* p. 187, n. 1, where further references are given.

[466] Commentary on *Genesis: Am.,* pp. 20 (10), 37 (20), 84 (44); on *Exodus:* p. 105 (54); on *Job:* p. 15 (8); on *Sefer Yeẓirah:* p. 37 (20); *Polemic* against Ḥiwi: p. 37 (20).

[467] *Anan:* p. 190 (96) see below, p. 223; Benjamin: p. 201 (100) see below, p. 227. On the same page he refers also to "Books (or Book) of Anatomy," see above, note 454.

aim at eclecticism as such, but was concerned only in the interpretation and systematization of the Jewish religion. Any idea that lent itself to that purpose and helped to establish the religious truth was welcome material. However, the question whether or not Saadia should be designated as an eclectic is mere quibbling over words, since it is generally admitted that in his philosophic works he drew upon a variety of systems, which on the points in question, do not agree with one another. Saadia's merit in the field of philosophy is not to be sought in any originality of his as an inventor and propagator of new philosophic doctrines, but in the extraordinary skill with which he was able to bring a vast amount of foreign thought into subservience to the great religious *Weltanschauung,* which he was about to build up for the benefit of his people. For it is not always the original content of a thought that lends it particular value in the realm of human knowledge. As often, it is the new aspect under which an idea is conceived and the individual interpretation put upon it, that give it a special character and make it stimulative of fresh thought and new complexes of ideas. From this point of view Saadia is justly recognized as the creator of a new epoch in the history of the philosophy of religion. It was his "Book of Doctrines and Beliefs" that gave the impetus to the subsequent development of the whole of Jewish philosophic literature.

CONTENTS OF THE *Kitâb al-'Amânât.*[468]

A detailed presentation of the full content of this work, tempting as it is, cannot here be entered upon. Such an attempt would require a volume equal in size to Saadia's. Not even the full development of the main problems of the

[468] As the presentation of the content of the *'Amânât* generally follows the order of the original text, no references to the passages will be given, except in the case of direct quotations or in a few instances in which it seems advisable to point out a particular context. Parallel passages in the works of later Hebrew authors will also be referred to in exceptional instances only.

work, as the unity of God, free-will, immortality, and the like, can be undertaken in the limits set to the present volume. A brief summary of the more important topics treated of by the author must suffice to convey to the reader an idea of the substance and profundity of this work and its significance for the history of the mediæval philosophy of the Jews and partly for that of the whole scholastic world.

In the Introduction, beginning with the usual laudation of God,[469] the author first states the causes which in his opinion are responsible for all the error and confusion prevalent among the people. They are mainly ignorance and superficiality. He then describes the sad conditions among the people at large and especially among those of his own race who, constantly wavering in their philosophic opinions and religious beliefs, were unable to determine upon a definite course. These circumstances led him to the composition of this work which, he hoped, will prove a guide for the perplexed. "My heart grieved for mankind,"[470] he writes, "and my soul was moved on account of our own people Israel, as I saw in our times many of those who adhere to their faith entertain impure beliefs and unclear ideas, while those who deny the faith boast of their unbelief and triumphantly deride the men of truth, albeit they are themselves in error. I saw men sunk, as it were, in a sea of doubt and overwhelmed by the waves of confusion, and there was no diver to bring them up from the depths and no swimmer to come to their rescue. But as God has granted unto me some knowledge by which I can be useful to them, and endowed me with some ability which I might employ for their benefit, I felt that to help them was my duty and guiding them aright a moral obligation upon me."[471]

[469] See above, note 411.

[470] This declaration makes it probable that the book was intended not only for Jews but also for Muhammedans; see above, note 461.

[471] *'Amânât,* pp. 4 f. (*Emunot,* p. 3); comp. Graetz, *History* (English), III, 197 f., and especially Horovitz, in Hermann Cohen's *Festschrift* (*Judaica*), pp. 238 ff.

Saadia then takes up the question of why men are made subject to doubts and mistakes in their search after truth instead of being given immediate truth. The answer is, that immediate truth is only in the power of God, and for man to ask for it is tantamount to asking that he be made the equal of his Creator. Man being part of nature, his thinking must run through the whole scale of causes and effects, which requires time and patience.

The author is now prepared for the discussion of the four sources of knowledge, as described above. Much space is devoted to the demonstration of the manner in which the three natural sources of knowledge should be used in order to be assured of the correct results. Here, however, the question arises: If a man is capable of arriving at the truth by his own reasoning, what purpose was there in teaching him the same truth by religion? To this Saadia replies that the majority of men have not sufficient reasoning power to be relied upon, and even those who do possess it would have to go a long way before they could reach the truth through their unaided efforts.[472] In the meantime they would be without trustworthy guidance. Revealed religion was, therefore, an absolute necessity. It gave to the people, so to say, a ready-made truth, coming from God Himself, and provided them with a complete system of rules and regulations by which to govern their lives. This system has the advantage of affording a safe-conduct also to the uneducated, to women, and to those who by reason of youth or incapacity cannot avail themselves of philosophy. Adherence to religion does

[472] In the third chapter of the work Saadia takes up the same question in connection with prophecy and gives additional reasons for the necessity of religion. Everybody, Saadia argues, may recognize the idea of justice, and it would seem that no special messenger is needed to recommend it to our reason. However, it is not a question of the idea as such, but of the proper ways and modes in which it is to be carried into practice. For these you must have rules and regulations based on divine authority, so as to command the respect and the obedience of the people; comp. Guttmann, *Saadia,* 140 f. Judah Halevi adopted this view from Saadia, see *Kuzari,* I, 79; II, 56; III, 7; see also the following two notes.

not, however, free us from the duty of thinking for ourselves. On the contrary, only when we examine its teachings by the light of reason, can we grasp their true meaning and fulfill their demands.[472a]

Saadia has a peculiar fondness for numbers. In this book he often carries it to an extreme. Like a conscientious bookkeeper he puts upon record the number of all the arguments and counter-arguments for and against a theory, keeps careful account of the points he has scored against his opponents, lays special emphasis on the number of theories about certain subjects and of the causes that produce such and such effects. Here, too, he winds up the Introduction by enumerating eight causes that lead to infidelity.[473]

(I) The first chapter, the longest in the book, deals with *creation*. After a brief characterization of the great difficulties this problem offers to the philosophic investigator, the author gives a full presentation of thirteen different theories concerning it. His own theory, which according to him is that of the Bible, he puts first—that the world was created by God *ex nihilo*. To support the Biblical doctrine he adduces four philosophic proofs, the principal elements of which are derived partly from the writings of Aristotle and partly from those of the Muhammedan philosophers known in literature under the collective designation of Mu'tazilites. The remaining twelve theories, which he refutes one after the other, are given anonymously, but they can all be traced with more or less certainty to their respective Greek, Arabic, and Persian authors.

[472a] All this reasoning was tacitly adopted by Maimonides (*Dalâlat*, I, 34); comp. Guttmann, in *Moses ben Maimon*, II, 208 ff.

[473] The same causes are enumerated by Maimonides, *l. c.*, who no doubt followed Saadia; see Guttmann, *l. c.*, p. 210, n. 2; above, notes 416, 446.—Guttmann, *Saadia*, p. 53, n. 1, has pointed out numerous passages of the work in which the same playing with numbers occurs. This mystic love for numbers seems to have made Saadia go to the trouble of figuring out that no less than 19,169 forms can be derived from every Hebrew verb! Comp. Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, IV, 202; Bacher, *Anfänge*, p. 54; below, pp. 218, 312, and note 531.

In the arrangement of these theories Saadia reversed the order he had adopted for the enumeration of the nine theories of the world's creation in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah*. There, as we have seen, he begins with the theory that he considers the most objectionable of the nine, namely, the doctrine of the Eternalists (*Dahriyya*), who, asserting that the world is eternal, deny creation altogether. He then proceeds according to the respective degrees of unacceptability from the least to the most probable, rejecting all theories until he reaches the last, which is his own.

In the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* on the contrary, he states first his own view, which he bases on the Bible, and then arranges the following twelve theories on the principle of the least objectionable first, followed in turn by the others in the order of their probability.[474] The result is that the theory (a combination of atomism and Platonism) which in the Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* was rated as being next to the most unreasonable, appears here as next to the most reasonable. In both books it is put in the second place! The explanation lies in the fact that aside from the Biblical theory (*creatio ex nihilo*), which, as is to be expected, occupies first place in the one arrangement and last in the other, only two of the other eight theories discussed in the *Sefer Yeẓirah* are taken up also in the *Kitâb al-'Amânât*. For the six theories in the former work, ten entirely different ones are given in the latter. According to the standard set up by the author for the valuation of the various theories, it is proper that one which in comparison to the others treated in the same book should be considered as coming near the worst, is recognized as being close to the best of those treated in the other book. The same standard

[474] This is not a mere conjecture, but is indicated clearly enough by Saadia himself, who at the beginning of each refuted theory repeats the stereotyped phrase, "and the adherents of this theory are still more ignorant than those of the preceding theory" (*e. g. Am.*, p. 49, l. 4: והאולאי אנהל מן אלאולין). This remark is missing only at the beginning of the eighth theory, probably by oversight.

required that the theory of the Eternalists, the first in the Commentary, be put tenth in the present work.

The principles upon which Saadia built up his standard for the valuation of the theories cannot be set forth here. It would involve a detailed presentation of all his arguments against the theories themselves, which space forbids.[475] But it has been necessary to present the facts, since they have been heretofore overlooked. It should also be pointed out in particular that the doctrine of the author of the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* for the elucidation of which Saadia had composed his Commentary on that work, is entirely disregarded in his present enumeration of the theories on creation. This is not to be interpreted, however, with a recent writer, as a proof that Saadia "did not take that doctrine seriously enough to include it among the theories historically authenticated."[476] Though he did not identify himself with the doctrine of the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* he certainly considered it more acceptable than any of those here rejected. Its omission is due to the fact that in this work he deals with the one theory which in his opinion was positively true and with those which were positively wrong. The theory of the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* on the other hand, was recognized as tolerable, by way of a special exegesis which brought it essentially into harmony with the true Biblical theory. Thus, it was covered in the exposition of the Biblical theory, making further discussion of it superfluous. Moreover, the Commentary is referred to by Saadia in another passage in this first chapter of the *Kitâb al-'Amânât.*[477]

(II) The discussions contained in the first chapter led to the conclusion that the world was created. Hence there must

[475] On the whole see Guttmann, *Saadia,* pp. 33-75, which is so far the clearest presentation of the subject. Various points in Guttmann's presentation were severely criticized by D. Neumark, *Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie des Mittelalters,* Berlin, 1907, pp. 460-469. As to his identification of the tenth theory with that of Aristotle (p. 468), see Horovitz as quoted above, note 412*a*.

[476] Guttmann, *Saadia,* p. 26.

[477] See above, note 466.

be a Creator. The next task was to define the essence and nature of the Creator, thus logically demonstrated. This is the object of the second chapter, which bears the heading "Chapter of Unity." At the outset Saadia tries to meet the objection of those who deny the existence of God because He is not perceptible by the senses, the most reliable source of our knowledge. It is true, he says, that human knowledge originates in mere sense impressions, but we all know that it never stops there. From the most ordinary sense experiences which we have in common with the animals we proceed by degrees to higher and more abstract thoughts, and the farther we advance in our upward course, the more subtle become our ideas and concepts. This onward movement of our mind does not mean that we are losing ground in our search after truth. On the contrary, with every step forward the original truth derived from experience becomes more general and comprehensive, embracing a multitude of realities. In spite of incidental deviations from the straight course in our intellectual pilgrimage to the source of ultimate truth, we are constantly approaching nearer to the desired goal. There is, however, a natural limit to such intellectual progress. Man being finite, his thinking capacity must be limited. A point is reached at which the ideas become so subtle and abstract that they are beyond man's grasp. The God-idea is of the utmost subtlety, and hence past human comprehension. But, as we have seen, the finer and subtler an idea is, the more truth and reality it is bound to contain. The transcending subtlety of the God-idea is therefore in itself an irrefutable proof of its verity. God is the necessary postulate of our reason, the ultimate truth, *the sum total of all reality*. To demand that He be perceptible by the senses is a retrogression from the higher stages of comprehension to the lower stages of animal sense-perception. Indeed, a perceivable, corporeal God is a contradiction in itself. What we are looking for is an extra-mundane cause of all existence, which necessarily transcends the category of bodies.

After these preliminary remarks, Saadia refutes some other erroneous ideas about God that had come to his knowledge, and then turns to the discussion of the main subject, the unity and uniqueness of God, involving the very important question of the Divine attributes.[478] The author adduces numerous verses from the Scriptures which describe God as *One,* excluding all plurality or diversity from His nature; as *Unique,* excluding the existence of any other God besides Him; and as *living, omnipotent,* and *omniscient.* The Scriptural testimony to the oneness of God is substantiated by three positive proofs based upon reason. These are followed by a controversy against the doctrine of dualism. The arguments against this doctrine serve indirectly as further proofs for the doctrine of unity. In the ensuing paragraph the other three essential attributes of God are taken up for detailed discussion. Special emphasis is laid on the demonstration that life, omnipotence, and omniscience do not constitute a plurality in God's essence. They merely designate this essence in accordance with the aspect under which it is viewed. The idea of a Creator necessarily implies life, power, and knowledge. In explicating these attributes we add nothing to His essence. They are enumerated separately by reason of a shortcoming of language, which possesses no single term to convey all of them at once. At this point Saadia enters upon a lengthy controversy against the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, showing that it originated from a misinterpretation of the same three essential attributes of God. In connection therewith he discusses and refutes the various theories regarding the person of Jesus, evidencing his thorough acquaintance with Christian polemics on this point.

Having established the idea of God's absolute unity, Saadia devotes several pages to another important matter

[478] For a detailed discussion of this subject see Kaufmann, *Geschichte der Attributenlehre in der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie des Mittelalters,* Gotha, 1877, pp. 1-77; Neumark, *Geschichte,* II, Berlin, 1910, an exhaustive study, to which the entire volume is devoted; comp. Guttmann, *Saadia,* pp. 90 ff.

with direct bearing on the problem under consideration. Numerous passages in the Bible speak of God in terms clearly implying corporeity. Strictly taken, they contradict the idea of a spiritual unity. They depict God as equipped with human organs—as hands, eyes, ears—and possessed of the qualities, affections, and emotions characteristic of human beings. Saadia classifies these anthropomorphic terms under the ten Aristotelian categories, and shows that, as none of these categories is applicable to God, so none of the terms falling under them can be literally applied to Him. By numerous quotations from the Bible he proves that in the ordinary use of the Hebrew language all such terms have, besides their literal meaning, a figurative sense. Whenever they are used of God, therefore, they must be taken in the latter significance; that is, as figures of speech.

In a concluding paragraph Saadia describes, in a highly poetical manner and with deep religious emotion, the state of happiness and peace of mind that falls to the lot of him who has attained to a true conception of God, and is permeated by the firm belief in His love and benevolence toward mankind. There is a rhythm in the evenly-balanced sentences of this paragraph, and a religious fervor that cannot fail to impress even the modern reader, despite his widely divergent mode of thought.

(III) The investigation, so far, has brought to light the facts that the world was created and that its Creator is *indivisible, unique, incorporeal.* The question which now forces itself upon our mind is the purpose of the Creator in forming His world. To the solution of this question Saadia accordingly devotes the third chapter of his work, bearing the title "Command and Prohibition." Unhesitatingly he declares at the very beginning of the discussion that creation was an act of grace on the part of the Creator, who desired to make His creatures happy. To assure their happiness He gave them a code of laws, injunctions and prohibitions, by obedience to which they would realize His purpose, that is, to be happy. Here we are confronted with the difficulty, that God could have granted happiness without impos-

ing the burden of the law upon mankind. To this objection Saadia replies that nothing whatsoever will give man perfect happiness unless he feels that he has a right to what he possesses, that somehow or other he has personally merited it. Wherever this consciousness is lacking, he will not enjoy happiness completely. To enable us to be perfectly happy with the material and spiritual blessings God intended for us, He enjoined upon us numerous laws and ordinances, the observance of which requires great sacrifice and much self-restraint on our part, thus giving us a chance to acquire, through our own efforts, the ultimate state of perfect happiness in store for us.

These introductory remarks on the purpose of the divine law lead the author to a general characterization of the latter and its educational value for humanity. He divides the Biblical laws into two main classes, those dictated by human reason (ʿaḳliyyât = שכליות), and those which have their origin in divine revelation (sam'iyyât = שמעיות)—a distinction adopted by Saadia from Muhammedan literature and later accepted by Jewish mediæval philosophers.[479] Saadia endeavors to prove that even the laws based on revelation, though we cannot always recognize their *raison d'être,* are by no means irrational, and have, besides, a moral disciplinary value, inasmuch as they train us in submission to a higher will.

In connection with the idea of revelation Saadia discusses the subject of prophecy, its credibility, and its necessity for the people; divides the essential content of Scriptures into three branches, the narrative, the legal, and the prophetic; and tries to prove their historical trustworthiness from the

[479] Maimonides (*Eight Chapters,* ch. 6), however, strongly opposed this classification of the law, which is to be found also in Saadia's Introduction to the Commentary on Proverbs; comp. Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2165; see for the literature on the subject the references given by Joseph I. Gorfinkle, in his scholarly study *The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics,* New York, 1912, p. 77, n. 3; comp. also Steinschneider, *HB.,* X, 173; Goldziher, *Kitâb ma'ânî al-nafs,* Berlin, 1907, pp. 22 ff.; Guttmann, *Saadia,* p. 135, n. 2; *Festschrift* of Isr. Lewy, p. 315, n. 6 (*Moses ben Maimon,* II, 206, n. 3).

viewpoint of reason. The object of the lengthy discussion was in all probability the refutation of the doctrine of a Hindu sect, who denied the need of prophecy, and whom Saadia mentions further on in the same chapter under the name of Barâhîma (Brahmans)—by the way, the only sect mentioned by name in his work.

The defense of the Bible as a reliable historical record suggested another important problem for immediate treatment, the question whether the Biblical dispensation was given for all time, or was to be abrogated at some subsequent period and replaced by another dispensation. The matter was much in dispute among Jews, Christians, and Muhammedans alike.[480] The adherents of Christianity and Islam maintained, on the basis of numerous passages in the Bible as well as general reasons, that the original law was, from the very first, intended only for a limited time, and was to be replaced by their respective systems of religion. Saadia refutes their arguments. He shows that they have misinterpreted the Biblical passages adduced by them. One of these refuted arguments may here be briefly reproduced. There is no cogent reason, the opponents say, why we should be bound to believe in Moses because of the miracles he performed more than in other prophets (Jesus and Muhammed, respectively) who performed similar miracles. Saadia declares that when he first heard this argument, he was greatly surprised, for our belief in the prophecy of Moses is not due merely to his performance of miracles. It is based on the intrinsic ethical value of the message he carried.[481] For that matter we believe in any prophet who brings us a similarly acceptable message. The miracles are but a secondary matter. If a miracle-worker, claiming prophetic inspiration, asks us to accept what our reason considers posi-

[480] For the literature see Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur,* pp. 322 f.

[481] This view is actually taken up again by the most recent Jewish scholars on the subject; see for instance Max Wiener, *Zur Geschichte des Offenbarungsbegriffs,* in the Hermann Cohen-*Festschrift* (*Judaica*), pp. 12, 16, 18.

tively wrong (such as the Christian dogmas of the Trinity, Incarnation, etc.), we refuse to heed his miracles. No miracle can evidence the truth of that which is inherently untrue. Saadia illustrates the point by the example of two different sorts of claims laid before a court by a litigant. If one should sue a man for the sum of thousands of denarii, the court will hear the witnesses summoned to testify to the rightness of his claim, but if his contention be that the defendant owes him the Tigris, the court will at once dismiss the case as nonsensical, without the hearing of any testimony.

In the last portion of this chapter Saadia defends the authority of the Bible against the attacks made upon it by the Jewish heretic Ḥiwî of Balkh, who, however, is not mentioned by name in this connection. Of the many objections of Ḥiwî to the Bible, said to have numbered two hundred, Saadia selects twelve for refutation.[482] In all proba-

[482] One of the twelve points refuted by Saadia (the fourth, *Am.*, p. 141; *Em.*, p. 72) deserves special notice here. The opponent is quoted as objecting to the Biblical institution of sacrifices on the ground that sacrifices are the cause of great cruelty to animals. Saadia replies: "God has decreed death upon all living beings. In the case of man death comes naturally at the expiration of the time-limit God sets to his existence. But in the case of animals any moment when they are taken to be killed is the time-limit set to their existence. With them the killing takes the place of natural death. Should it be true that killing causes more suffering to the animal than a natural death, then God certainly knows it. Justice would require that He reward the animal after death in proportion to the additional suffering inflicted upon it. We accept this view—provided the additional suffering is made plausible—because reason demands it, not because it is prescribed by the revealed law." This strange theory of a reward to animals in the hereafter, adopted by Saadia from the Mu'tazilites, is not in keeping with rabbinical teachings (comp. מסכת כלה, ed. Coronel, ch. 2, p. 4: בהמה לשחיטה עומדת ואין לה חלק לעוה"ב, and *Kohelet rabba*, 3, 18: מה הבהמה נדונת בהריגה ואין לה חלק לעוה"ב כך הרשעים וכו'; comp. Jellinek, בהמ"ד, I, 151, bottom) and is another instance of Saadia's disagreement with some Talmudic traditions (see above, note 462, and especially below, note 518). The theory was accepted also by some other Geonim (comp. תשובות הגאונים,

bility the whole paragraph is reproduced by Saadia from his polemical work against this heretic (quoted above, p. 198) under the title "Refutation of Ḥiwî of Balkh," which will be considered under *Polemics*.

(IV) Human happiness—so Saadia had sought to prove—was the ultimate purpose of God in creating the world, and the law was shown to have been handed down as a means to that happiness.[453] This doctrine can be accepted only on the supposition that man is perfectly free in his actions, so that whatever he does, good or evil, may be set to the account of his own deliberate choice. Otherwise, *i. e.*, if man's actions are predetermined by his physical nature, or—what is meant by our author—by the higher will of God, they would count for nothing, and he should receive neither reward nor punishment for his obedience or disobedience of the divine law. We thus encounter the perplexing problem of free will, that has troubled the philosophers of all nations in bygone ages, and fills the pages of many a philosophic work of our own day. To its solution Saadia devotes the main part of his fourth chapter, which bears the title "Obedience and Disobedience."

As is to be expected, his theory, for which numerous verses of the Bible are quoted, is that men are free agents and therefore fully responsible for their actions. But before entering

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ed. Harkavy, p. 190, no. 375; see also *ib.*, p. 373), who were, without naming, opposed by Maimonides, *Moreh*, III, 17; comp. also his Commentary on the Mishnah, *Baba Ḳamma*, 4, 3, and Ibn Ṣaddiḳ, עולם קטן, ed Horovitz, pp. 60, 72. In particular the Ḳaraites, who generally followed the theology of the Mu'tazilites, favored this view; see Munk, *Guide*, III, 128, n. 4, whose assertion "dans les écrits de Saadia, nous n'en trouvons aucune trace" is due to oversight of the passage in Saadia's *'Amânât* quoted above; comp. Kaufmann, *Attributenlehre*, p. 503; Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur*, pp. 337, 356, top; *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, p. 438, n. 481; Gutmann in Isr. Lewy's *Festschrift*, pp. 313 ff. (*Mos. b. Maim.*, II, 204); Malter, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. IX (1918-1919), p. 239. For details regarding the other objections of Ḥiwi see Guttmann, *MGWJ.*, 1879, pp. 260-270, 289-300; Graetz, *Geschichte* (4), V, 533-535 (end of *Note* 20; *JE.*, VI, 429 f., X, 582, no. 6; comp. also below, *Bibliography*, section VI, pp. 384 ff.

[453] Comp. Maimonides, *Guide*, III, 27.

upon the subject proper, he raises the question as to what constitutes the most important part and the real object of creation. An examination of nature reveals that the most essential part of any organic body is placed in its center. The kernel, which is indispensable for the generation of the plant, is in the middle of the fruit; the yelk, in which the chick develops to life, is the center of the egg; the heart, as the seat of vitality, is likewise in the center of the body. If, then, we find that the earth, too, is in the center of the universe, surrounded by the celestial spheres, we may safely conclude by analogy that it [484] is the most important part of all creation. Now, if we turn to the inhabitants of the earth, we shall certainly recognize human beings as the superiors of all. Hence it is man that is the ultimate aim of the whole cosmic plan. This view is fully in keeping with the fact that God created man last, "just as the architect, who erects a palace, furnishes it, puts everything in order, and then invites the owner to its occupation." [485]

[484] Landauer, who usually follows the Oxford recension of the Arabic text, here (*'Amânât,* p. 146, l. 11) made an exception, choosing instead the reading of the St. Petersburg recension, followed also by Ibn Tibbon (p. 75: המכון בבריאה הוא בארץ), according to which Saadia intended to say that "the purpose of creation is *on* earth" (Arabic: הי פי אלארץ). This reading, however, is wrong, as is evident from the following text, and the Arabic preposition פי, though attested also by Ibn Tibbon, is probably a corrupt repetition of the immediately preceding הי.

[485] *Am.*, p. 146, l. 16 (*Em.* p. 75), based on a passage in *b. Synhedrin,* 38*a*. The view here proposed by Saadia, that man is the final purpose of creation, hence superior to all celestial hosts, the angels and stars, which are created for man's service only, found many opponents in the ranks of mediæval Jewish authors. The subject is too large to be treated in a note. A few references will lead to the literature in question. Among the distinguished authors who disagreed with the Gaon in this matter are Hananel of Ḳairwân (1050) (see Rapoport, *Bikkūrē ha-'Ittim,* XII, 24, end of note 15); Abraham Ibn Ezra (*Commentary* on *Genesis,* 1, 2; *Short Commentary* on *Exodus,* 23, 20), who is extremely severe against the Gaon on this point (comp. Reggio and Luzzatto, *Kerem Chemed,* IV, 104-108, 136 f.; Mortara, *Ozar Nechmad,* II, 209; M. Friedlaender, *Essays on the Writings of Abraham Ibn Ezra,* p. 115, n. 1); Maimonides (*Guide,*

Here we must ask ourselves: Wherein consists man's particular importance, that he should be thus distinguished and recognized as the crown of all creation? In nothing else, we reply, than in his being endowed with reason, with that divine soul which, in the words of the Psalmist, makes him but "a little less than God himself." At this point Saadia waxes enthusiastic in depicting the excellence of human reason and the great things man is able to accomplish through his reason. "With his reason man embraces the past and the future; by it he subdues the animals, that they till the ground and carry in its produce; by it he is able to draw the water out of the depth of the earth to its surface, nay, by it he even invents hydraulic implements that pump the water automatically; by it he builds lofty palaces, makes magnificent garments, and prepares dainty dishes; by it

III, 13; Munk, pp. 95 f.), and his numerous followers down to the end of the fifteenth century, *e. g.* Jedaiah Bedersi (בחינת עולם chapter 12; comp. Schorr, *Kerem Chemed,* VIII, 204), and his commentator Moses Ibn Ḥabib (about 1500), who in his commentary on the latter work (Ferrara, 1552), 61*a*, speaks with little respect of the Gaon and expresses his great satisfaction with Ibn Ezra's thorough refutation of his theory (ויותר מגונה מזה הוא דעת מי שחושב כי האדם יותר נכבד מן המלאכים כאשר חשב רבנו סעדיה בספר האמונות והדעות בתחלת המאמר הד' וחשב שהביא ראיות על זה להורות כי המכוון בכל הנבראים הוא האדם וכבר סתר דעתו הראב"ע בפרוש התורה והפיל כל ראיותיו ארצה בפרשת ואלה המשפטים).

Ibn Ḥabib, it may be noted in passing, shows very little appreciation of the whole book *Emūnōt;* see his remark at the end of the commentary, 122*b*: לא הגיע אלינו ספר מחובר באמונה מן הגאונים זולת ספר האמונות לרבנו סעדיה ואיננו מספיק אחת מני אלף למה שכלל בו הרב המורה. While Maimonides's *Guide,* as a philosophic work, is, no doubt, superior to Saadia's *Emūnōt,* Ḥabib's statement nevertheless contains a gross exaggeration; comp. also below, note 607. Saadia's view is in keeping with that prevailing in traditional literature (see *e. g. b. Berakōt, 32b; Ḥullin,* 91*b,* bottom), hence it was upheld by the more orthodox mediæval Jewish authors, among them Baḥya b. Asher (comp. Bernstein, *MWJ.,* XVIII, 172, n. 32). For further material see Geiger החלוץ, II, 20; Luzzatto, כוכבי יצחק, V, 33; D. Kohn (Kahana), תולדות הראב"ע, pp. 51, 86; Halberstam, in his notes on פס"י of Judah b. Barzillai, p. 307; Schmiedl, *Studien,* pp. 83-85; comp. also below, note 508.

he leads armies, equips military camps, and manages the affairs of state, so that men become civilized and orderly; by it he learns the nature of the celestial spheres, the course of the planets, the size of their bodies, their distances from one another, as well as other astronomical matters."

"In view of all this it is only natural that man should have been commissioned with carrying out God's law, be rewarded for its keeping and punished for its transgression, for he is the axis of the world and its foundation (*ḳuṭb al-ʿâlami wa-ḳâʿida-tuhu,* Ibn Tibbon: קטב העולם ומכונתו)."

"This belief of ours in man's superiority is not merely an imagination, or the result of our desire to exaggerate our importance, nor is it out of boastfulness or arrogance that we make such claims, but it is positively true and perfectly legitimate. Why, then, should God have equipped man with that supreme power of reason that makes him the master of all creation? For no other purpose than to make him the beneficiary of the law (through which, as explained in the preceding chapter, he is to attain to happiness), as it is said in Scripture (Job, 28, 28): And He said unto man, Behold, that thou mayest fear the Lord, was wisdom bestowed upon thee, and understanding, that thou mayest depart from evil." [486]

Following these introductory remarks Saadia tries to meet eight [487] objections that might be raised against his views. One might ask, for instance, how is it possible, considering his physical smallness and insignificance, to assume that man is the purpose of creation? The answer is, that "though his body be small, his soul is larger than heaven and earth, for through it he reaches even what is above them and the cause of them, the Creator Himself." The short duration of man's life on earth is contrasted with his eternal

[486] *ʾAmânât,* p. 147 (76). All this is ridiculed by Abraham Ibn Ezra, in the passages referred to in the preceding note. For Saadia's interpretation of the verse here quoted comp. above, note 418.

[487] Saadia says *seven* (*Am.,* p. 150, l. 14; *Em.,* p. 77), but actually counts *eight.* Similar mistakes in counting happen to him several times in this book; comp. notes 526, 528.

life hereafter, the latter being a compensation for the former. The frailty of the human body, its composition of the four humors and consequent impurity, are declared to be the necessary result of man's being part of this earthly world of the four elements. To demand that man be otherwise, that is, simple and eternal, is tantamount to asking that he be made a star or an angel, or that, for example, the earth should be fire, which contradicts all logic. Man, such as he is and should be, is the finest organism possible on earth. As to his being subject to diseases and accident, the author finds that they are for man's good, since they make him pray to God for relief and teach him to fear punishment. It is also true that man's life is often imperiled by his passions. These, too, are necessary for his own preservation. Without desire for food, sexual intercourse, and the like, he could not exist. His task is to control these passions and to use them in a proper, permissible way. That a human being should at times be put to death for the commission of crimes is likewise fully justified. Reason demands that a degenerate individual, who endangers the life of others, be destroyed for the safety of the rest of mankind, just as it is sometimes necessary to cut off a diseased limb in order to save the rest of the body.

Having thus demonstrated God's justice and benevolence toward man, the author feels prepared for the discussion of the main subject, the freedom of the will. It was one of God's benevolent acts toward men, he declares, that He granted them freedom of will, by which they can determine for themselves the course they are to follow, thus working out their own salvation. That we actually possess free will the author proves by Scriptural verses and lengthy philosophic arguments, which cannot here be reproduced. The main difficulty in the way of this assumption is its apparent incompatibility with the idea of God's omniscience. If God knows in advance how man is going to act in a certain instance, as the idea of prescience requires, man is evidently bound to act in accordance therewith, else God's prescience would be nullified. We are thus compelled to

sacrifice either God's foreknowledge or man's independence of decision—a dilemma which baffled the minds of all the philosophers of the Middle Ages. Saadia tries to do away with the difficulty by declaring that God's knowledge of what will occur does not necessitate its actual coming into existence. Man is therefore free to do as he pleases. Moreover, God's knowledge always extends to man's ultimate decision, whatever this may be, so that there can be no contradiction between the two. This is about as satisfactory a disposition of the question as the hitching of two horses to a wagon, each one pulling in a different direction, and thus neither one bringing the load forward. Later philosophers,[488] indeed, refused to accept this solution, but Saadia himself does not seem to have suspected the inadequacy of his arguments.

The idea of God's prescience causes a number of other difficulties. They are taken up by Saadia, one by one, and if we accept the author's premises, they are successfully explained. A closing paragraph is devoted to the interpretation of numerous Biblical passages which appear to emphasize the fact of God's interference with man's will, depriving him of the power of self-determination. Saadia classifies the respective passages, to which, he says, many more can be added from the Bible, under eight general headings, and tries to show that in each case the difficulty arises only through a misunderstanding of the true meaning.

(V) Man is a free agent, the law was given to him for his benefit, and it is for him to follow it. This is the net result of the investigation so far. But what if we are overcome by doubts and misgivings as to the value and usefulness of the law for us? What if a given law contains nothing that appeals to our reason and recommends it for acceptance? What if, as experience often shows, those who conscientiously obey the law live in poverty and distress, while those who disregard it are prosperous and happy? These and similar questions the author proposes to

[488] See Guttmann, *Saadia*, p. 170, n. 1.

treat in the fifth chapter, called "Merits and Demerits." As usual he opens the discussion by quoting verses from the Bible, which, in his opinion, enlighten us on the subject. "Repeated acts of obedience to the law are designated in the Bible as merits, while acts of disobedience are called demerits, and both, we are told, are put to man's credit or discredit. We are further informed that the deeds of a man leave an impress on his soul, either ennobling or debasing it, and although this escapes the knowledge of men it is patent to God."[489] These sentences, based on Scriptural verses, are the key to the solution of all the questions raised.

In a lengthy paragraph the author proceeds to show the correctness of the Biblical ideas from the point of view of reason. We should not always be ready to deny the importance of a thing merely because we are ignorant of its usefulness. There are hundreds of things even in the material world the value of which is not known to the majority of us, but only to a few experts. It is only the numismatist who can distinguish between valuable and worthless coins, the physician who understands how to diagnosticate the nature of a disease, and the jeweller who can tell the difference between the various kinds of precious stones. The same applies to every art and science. Inaccessible to the multitude, they are known to the few initiated in the secrets. If this be the case with things material, how much truer must it be when we deal with things spiritual. The soul is admittedly the most spiritual entity under human observation. What wonder that we have no knowledge as to the effect certain practices and customs of ours may have on it. We cannot tell the influence on our soul or character that is exercised by the observance of ceremonies, the dietary laws, and the like. We must assume that God, the Creator of our soul, knows the benefits that accrue to it from lawful acts and the harm that it suffers if we go counter to His ordinances. It is therefore best for us to carry out God's commands to the letter. The reward is certain to follow.

[489] *'Amânât,* p. 165 (84), beginning of the chapter.

The general ideas of merit and demerit having thus been made clear, the author divides all men into ten classes, according to the degree in which these two aspects of human life manifest themselves in their religious conduct. The division seems to be, in part, rather arbitrary and due to the author's fondness for numbers, though he founds it on Talmudic passages. The first two classes are pious and impious men. In order to be recognized as pious, it is not necessary that man should have only merits to his account. It is sufficient that his meritorious deeds or good qualities should preponderate over his bad ones. Such a man is designated in Scripture as pious, as we call a man healthy if he is in a generally good physical condition, though his health may not be absolutely perfect. The same holds good also with regard to the impious person. He may possess a number of commendable qualities, but he is to be judged according to the evil traits dominant in his character. The status of men in the world to come depends upon the major number of their actions. For the minority, good or bad, men are rewarded or punished in this world.[489a]

With these statements, derived from the Talmud, Saadia prepares for the answer to the important question, formulated above, why the righteous are so often subject to suffering and affliction, while the wicked enjoy well-being and happiness—a question repeated again and again in the Bible[490] and the puzzle of the theologians of all creeds. Men being judged according to the nature of the majority of their deeds, Saadia says, the pious are destined to eternal bliss in the hereafter, while the impious are doomed to lasting infelicity. Each of the two classes, however, has to be rewarded or punished also for those deeds, good or evil, which are in the minority, and as this is to take place in this world, it results therefrom that the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. It may happen, however, that the righteous or the wicked change their respective courses, or by a certain action invalidate their past records. In this case their

[489a] This is the teaching of R. 'Akiba, *Bereshit rabba,* ch. 33, 1.
[490] Thus Jeremiah, 12, 1; comp. *b. Berakōt, 7a.*

status in this world has to be reversed. As most of the actions of our fellow-men and their inner motives are beyond our control, we can never account for their standing in life, and are therefore often inclined to doubt the justice of the distribution of worldly blessings. It also happens that the righteous are afflicted merely because God knows that they will stand the test and remain faithful and submissive, as was exemplified by Job. This is of great educational value for others. The firmness and steadfastness of the righteous man serve them as a model in similar situations; while he who has thus been tried is compensated in the future world for his undeserved sufferings. The sufferings of innocent children, too, can only be explained by assuming that they are to be rewarded therefor in the world to come.[490a]

For the prosperity of the wicked there are additional reasons, of which Saadia suggests six; among them, that transgressors are sometimes spared because they are to be used as instruments for the punishment of others, or because they are sure to repent and reform at some future time, as in the instances of king Manasseh and others.

Saadia now turns to the other eight classes of men, which he briefly characterizes in accordance with Talmudic passages. To these he adds a special class, consisting of men whose good and evil deeds balance each other. In connection with the tenth class, that of penitents, he gives a definition of true repentance, points out seven instances in which prayer for forgiveness is not accepted,[491] three kinds of sins which

[490a] This question of the suffering of children has been touched upon also by Plato (*Republic,* X, 615). Saadia reverts to it twice in the following; see below, notes 511*a*, 525*a*.

[491] The source of this enumeration is probably a Baraita in the tractate דרך ארץ in the recension of the מהזור ויטרי, p. 725, where, however, not seven, but *ten,* mostly different instances are enumerated. Saadia must have had a different recension of the Baraita. He in turn was the source of Judah he-Ḥasid, ספר חסידים, § 612 (ed. Berlin, § 36) and of Eleazar of Worms (רקח, § 28, repeated in § 216; comp. also § 29), who added two points to the seven of Saadia; comp. Friedmann, נספחים לסדר אליהו זוטא, Vienna, 1904, p. 9, who overlooked Saadia as the source of Judah and Eleazar. Both Judah and Eleazar follow the text of the Paraphrase as against that of

cannot be forgiven although the sinner has repented (seducing others to iniquity, calumniating, and robbing without readiness to restore the goods),[492] four sins for which punishment is meted out in this world (false oath, murder, adultery, and bearing false witness), and finally three virtues, which are recompensed in this life. These are: honoring father and mother, compassion with animals, and perfect honesty in one's dealings. All these statements are supported by verses from the Bible.[493]

A paragraph is devoted to the description of the relative value of the moral or immoral conduct of an individual under given circumstances. For instance, the virtue of temperance is to be more appreciated in a young person than in the old, while licentiousness is more contemptible when found among the latter; giving aid to an enemy is one of the higher virtues, and injuring a friend reveals special viciousness; modesty on the part of a great man is particularly praiseworthy, while the pride of the plebeian is particularly detestable; cheating the poor, or the learned or other public benefactors is objectionable to a high degree; robbing a multitude of people is an aggravated crime (exacting a thousand denarii from a thousand men is worse than exacting the same sum from half the number), while on the other hand charitableness and uprightness on the part of the poor are of special credit to them. Here again each statement is proved by a Biblical verse.

The last portion of this chapter speaks of sins in thought and sins committed out of ignorance, thoughtlessness, or under the stress of circumstances. Evil thoughts are not

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Ibn Tibbon; comp. Bibliography, p. 362, no. 1. The passage was made use of also by the moralist Judah Ḥalâẓ of Tlemçen, Algeria (1490), in his ספר המוסר (Mantua, 1560), *fol.* 30*a*, without mentioning the source; see note 493; *Bibliography*, p. 368, top.

[492] Comp. *Baba Ḳamma*, 94*b*; the passage was made use of by Abraham b. Ḥiyya, הגיון הנפש, Leipzig, 1960, pp. 28, 32.

[493] Saadia adds here a description of five classes of penitents, one higher than the other. This is again given anonymously by Judah Ḥalâẓ (see note 491) *fol.* 19*b*, who adds a sixth class.

punishable, except those denying the existence of God; for belief and unbelief depend entirely upon one's thoughts.[494] Among evil thoughts Saadia counts the misinterpretation of Scriptures that leads to false conceptions of God, and the like.[495] A judge who misconstrues the law and punishes the people to serve his own purposes[496] "is destroying his own life." Ignorance of the law is no excuse for unlawful actions, nor is drunkenness. The sufferings of those who are afflicted with illness, or of Israelites who are oppressed by their enemies, do not justify them in uttering complaints against God; they ought to endure and hope for God's mercy. All this is borne out by verses from Scripture and partly also by passages from the Talmud. Saadia concludes with the remark that it would lead him too far to gather all the material pertaining to the subject, but that he has selected the most obvious points, which, he hopes, will prove beneficial in stirring up the people to their religious duties.

(VI) The entire system of Saadia's philosophy, as presented in the preceding chapters, has the immortality of the soul as its necessary postulate. The misery and wretchedness prevailing in the world, the brevity and uncertainty of our lives, the injustice and iniquity so overwhelmingly present in all human affairs—all this is out of harmony with the proposed view that man is the culminating point of creation and points unmistakably to the existence of another world, where all evil is turned into good, and all wrong made right. The inhabitants of that world are the departed immortal souls. It thus becomes a matter of prime importance to probe into the nature of the human soul and define its essence. Incidentally the phenomenon of death is to be discussed, and a few suggestions made regarding the mysteries of the future

[494] Comp. Maimonides, *Eight Chapters*, II; הלכות עכו"ם, II, 3, 6; Malter, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. I (1910-1911), p. 485, n. 90, where additional references will be found.

[495] This is probably an allusion to the biblical critic Ḥiwi al-Balḥi, see below, pp. 267 f.

[496] Here no doubt the Exilarch David b. Zakkai is alluded to; comp. above, note 262.

life. The sixth chapter is accordingly entitled "On the Essence of the Soul, on Death, and What follows it."[497]

At the outset Saadia briefly announces his theory: God creates the soul, which takes its seat in the heart at the moment the body is completed. He sets a time-limit to the combined existence of body and soul, at the expiration of which they have to part, and when the number of souls God has seen fit to create is completed, body and soul will be resurrected to renewed and combined life. This is testified to by Scripture, proved by the prophets, and accepted by all Israel. It remains now to prove the truth of the Biblical doctrine by way of speculation. The first thing to be investigated is the essence of the soul. Saadia remarks that the subject is much disputed and that he refrains from quoting all the theories, but will select seven, the last of which is his own. What is adduced by Saadia as the first theory is a combination of five different Greek doctrines on the soul. Saadia takes them as one because, as he says, they have all the one view in common, that the soul is not a substantial entity, but merely an accident of the body, having no separate existence. It is natural that Saadia should oppose this theory with all its ramifications, as it denies the existence of a soul altogether. The second and the third theories, the one asserting that the soul consists of air and the other that it is fire, are both opposed by Saadia on the ground, that they deprive the soul of its spirituality, air and fire being two elementary substances. The fourth theory is more complicated. It assumes that the soul consists of two parts, the one rational and imperishable, with the heart as its seat, and the other irrational, present in the entire body and perishing with it (vitality). This theory is likewise rejected, because it destroys the unity of the soul. The fifth theory holds that the soul consists of two kinds of air, the one dwelling permanently in the body, the other coming

[497] For details on the contents of this chapter see the monograph of Horovitz, *Die Psychologie Saadias,* Breslau, 1898; comp. also Neumark *Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie,* I, 536-551; Guttmann, *Saadia,* pp. 194 ff.

from without through breathing, mixing with the former and sustaining it. This theory denies both the spirituality and the unity of the soul, and is therefore to be rejected. The sixth theory identifies the soul with the blood. While, as usual, no authority is mentioned for any of the preceding theories, an exception is made by our author in favor of the sixth. He ascribes it to Anan, the founder of Ḳaraism, who, Saadia says, was misled by a too literal interpretation of a scriptural verse, "the blood is the soul" (Deuteronomy, 12, 23).[498] Saadia is wrong, however, in stating that Anan is the only advocate of this theory. It was common among various ancient peoples and is mentioned by Aristotle[499] and also in the Midrash.[500] All the Greek theories mentioned by Saadia anonymously have been variously assigned to their respective authors; and the subject has been fully treated elsewhere.[501]

Having refuted the foregoing doctrines on the essence of the soul, Saadia turns to the presentation of his own view. By way of introduction he observes that the investigation of this subject is extremely difficult, and compares in this regard with the question of *creatio ex nihilo* and of the nature of the Creator, which accounts for the fact that so many conflicting theories have been advanced on the subject.

[498] Landauer (p. 191) and some of the Hebrew editions give here the wrong verse, Leviticus, 17, 11*b*. They were misled by Saadia's referring a little further to Leviticus, 17, 11*a* as "preceding" the verse quoted before. But the word in question (קודם) does not mean preceding *immediately*. Speaking of a verse in Deuteronomy he refers to a verse in Leviticus as preceding it.

[499] Aristotle, *De Anima*, I, 1; comp. Horovitz, *Psychologie Saadias*, p. 21, n. 36; Dukes, *Philosophisches aus dem zehnten Jahrhundert*, p. 58; Harkavy, *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, 1899, p. 119. The theory is mentioned also by Seneca, *Questiones Naturales*, VII, 24; comp. Adolfo Bonilla, *Hist. de la filosofia Española, Madrid*, 1908, I, 130.

[500] *Bereshit* rabbah, c. 14, § 9; comp. Theodor *ad locum*, p. 133; Ginzberg, *Die Sage bei den Kirchenvätern*, p. 22.

[501] See Malter, in the Hebrew monthly השלח, XXVI (1912), pp. 128-137.

This remark serves him as a basis for the interpretation of the verse (Eccles. 3, 21), "Who knoweth the spirit of men, whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth"? which seems to doubt the immortality of the soul. The problem being so difficult, the verse referred to means only to express admiration for him who succeeds in solving it. Saadia is very anxious to remove the difficulty, and offers two more explanations of the verse.[502]

Saadia's theory, based on Bible verses and on speculative arguments, is that the soul like every other being, is a creation of God. Its creation takes place at the moment the body, its seat, is complete and about to come into the world.[503] This statement is intended to express Saadia's opposition to the belief in the pre-existence of the soul, which makes it coeternal with God. While the soul has thus a beginning in time past, it is nevertheless immortal, that is, it has no end in time to come. This point, however, is not discussed here,

[502] This verse, which apparently doubts the immortality of the soul, greatly disturbed the Jewish interpreters; see Luzzatto, בית האוצר (ed. Lemberg), I, 35; Epstein, ר'משה הדרשן מנרבונה, Vienna, 1891, p. 46 (see below, note 618); *Zohar,* on Genesis, 4, 1. One of Saadia's interpretations of this verse was adopted by Abr. Ibn Ezra and by Rashi *ad locum,* who supports it by the same verse from Joel, 2, 14, which is here quoted by Saadia. Joseph Ibn Ṣaddiḳ, עולם קטן, ed. Horovitz, p. 35, ll. 30 ff., likewise makes literal use of Saadia's interpretation. The Ḳaraite Salmon b. Jeroham (see Isr. Günzig, *Der Commentar des Karäers Jephet ben Ali Halevi zu den Proverbien,* Cracow, 1898, p. 34, n. 15) may also have used Saadia (comp. *JQR.,* XIII, 340). Comp. also Goldziher, *Kitâb ma'ânî al-nafs,* Berlin, 1907, pp. 46 f.

[503] See on this point Guttmann, *Saadia,* p. 199, n. 2 (where read ברגע for בהגע, as in Berechiah's המצרף, p. 148, bottom), followed by Horovitz, *Psychologie,* p. 24, n. 40, and Neumark, I, 544. The same view was taught also by some of the Church Fathers. Thus, Isidore of Seville (d. 636): *Animam non esse partem divinae substantiae vel naturae; nec esse eam priusquam corpori misceatur, constat; sed tunc eam creari quando et corpus creatur, cui admisceri videtur* (*Sententiarum, liber* I, c. XII); comp. Bonilla, *Hist. de la filos. Española,* I, 243. Comp. also Goldziher, *l. c.,* German part, pp. 17 f.

but in the ninth chapter of the work.[504] The substance of the soul is as fine and brilliant as that of the celestial spheres, nay, it must be even finer than the latter, for, unlike the spheres, it is endowed with reason. As the substance of the spheres is illuminated by the stars, so is the substance of the soul made bright and luminous by the light of wisdom. By wisdom, Saadia understands that which is acquired through the study of the divine law and through a moral and religious life in harmony therewith. This is fully in keeping with his view regarding the influence of human actions on the condition of the soul, as propounded in the preceding chapter. Good deeds ennoble the soul and add brightness and splendor to its substance; immorality, on the contrary, degrades and darkens it. The power of reasoning is an essential attribute of the soul and in this regard it is independent of the body. For the manifestation of this power the soul is necessarily bound up with the body, as its physical instrument, without which it cannot act. In its combination with the body the soul appears under three different aspects, viz. as a cognitive, a spirited, and an appetitive power.[505] These three powers are

[504] *'Amânât*, 273 (138 f.). Speaking of the soul, Saadia draws there the line between existence without beginning, which is inadmissible, as it excludes creation, and existence without end, which is admissible, because, once the soul is created, it can be coëternal with its Creator. This view is based ultimately on a scholastic distinction between *perpetuity* and *eternity*, which is clearly expressed by Isidore of Seville (*l. c.*) in the following words: *Sicut angeli, ita et animae; habent enim initium, finem vero nullum. Nam quaedam in rebus temporalia sunt, quaedam perpetua, quaedam vero sempiterna. Temporalia sunt quibus inest ortus et obitus; perpetua quibus ortus, non terminus; sempiterna, quibus nec ortus, nec terminus.* There is, in my opinion, no reason for doubting, with Horovitz (*Psychologie*, p. 23, n. 38; comp. p. 65, n. 128), Saadia's positive denial of the pre-existence of the soul, the assertion of Abraham Ibn Ezra (Commentary on Is. 48, 16) to the contrary notwithstanding.

[505] This is the well-known Platonic division of the soul, which was accepted by several Jewish philosophers. I have prepared a special essay on the subject and refrain from discussing it here; comp. Guttmann, p. 201; Horovitz, pp. 30 f.; Malter, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. I (1910-1911), p. 460. Saadia discusses the three faculties of the soul also at the beginning of the tenth chapter.

not to be taken as three separate souls, but as different manifestations of one and the same psychic entity. The seat of the soul, the author states again, is in the heart, the central organ of the nervous system and thus the power-house of all sensation and motion. It is true that some large arteries ramify from the brain, but these have no psychic, only physical functions.[506] It is because of the heart's being the physical organ of the soul that Scripture always uses heart and soul (לב ונפש) as synonyms.

It might be objected, the author continues, that if the soul is such a sublime being, even finer than the celestial spheres, why should God have sent it down into an ignoble physical frame? This objection, Saadia says, implies that God, the Creator, acted unfairly toward one of His own creations, which is absurd, as it contradicts the very concept of God, the just and benevolent. Moreover, the question in itself has no sense, for soul means nothing else than a spiritual being acting in and through a body. An active soul without a body is as imaginable as a fire burning without combustible material. Body and soul are two correlatives, absolutely depending upon one another. In combination they constitute man. In a previous chapter, this combination, representing man, was set forth as God's purpose in creating the world, the ultimate purpose in creating man being that he should attain to happiness through his own merits. This is only possible when, in the constant struggle between the two partners, between the noble aspirations of the soul and the low desires of the body, man follows the counsel of his better half, the soul; that is, obeys the Law.[507] To demand that the

[506] This is in contradiction to what he says in his Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah*, p. 27 (French, 47), ll. 4-5, where he places the cognitive faculty in the brain (Plato). It is possible, however, that in the Commentary he does not give his own view, but that of the author of the *Sefer Yeẓirah*, as he understands him. The question here discussed is treated also in the Commentary, pp. 33 f. (55); comp. Kaufmann, *Die Sinne*, p. 63; Horovitz, *Psychologie*, p. 30, n. 50.

[507] Comp. Malter, "Personifications of Soul and Body," in *JQR.*, *N. S.*, vol. II (1911-1912), p. 473.

soul should have been left alone, therefore, reveals a failure to understand God's purpose, and is tantamount to declaring all creation as meaningless. One might just as well ask that the soul should be a star in heaven or an angel. It might be one or the other, but then it would not be a soul.[508]

The investigation into the substance of the soul is here closed, and the author turns to the discussion of the other two points announced in the description of the chapter, namely, "death and what follows." Body and soul together, he declares, are only one agent, as indicated in the Bible (Genesis, 2, 7), hence reward and punishment can only be meted out to both together as a unit. This statement was necessary, he says, because many people have confused ideas in this matter, some asserting that the soul alone is the subject of reward or punishment, while others affirm the same of the body alone. The Ḳaraite Benjamin Nahâwandi, basing the assertion on certain verses (Ezekiel, 32, 27, and Psalms, 35, 10), singled out the bones as the part of the body that is punished or rewarded. All this confusion is due to ignorance of the proper usage of Hebrew. The Bible often ascribes sins and virtues either to the soul (*e. g.* Leviticus, 4, 2) or to the flesh, "bāsār" (*e. g.* Psalms, 145, 21). These verses are taken literally, and various theories built upon them. What is overlooked is that in each instance the words are to be understood in the sense of *person,* including both soul and body. The same applies to the theory of Benjamin. Saadia quotes numerous verses from the Bible corroborating his view, and winds up with the citation of the famous Talmudic parable (*b.* Sanhedrin, 91*a*) of two men, one blind and the other lame, who, when called to account for the despoliation of the king's garden which they were appointed to watch, denied the deed on the ground of their physical disabilities. The king placed the lame man on the shoulders of his blind companion and demonstrated how they had committed the crime. So body and soul dis-

[508] This argumentation is in keeping with Saadia's view, that man is superior to the angels, regarding which see above, note 485.

own responsibility for their deeds in this world, as neither of them can act without the other. God then reunites them and metes out punishment to both together.[509]

Death is merely a dissolution of the partnership of soul and body. At the very entrance upon life every human being is equipped by God with a certain amount of physical power, which suffices for a corresponding period of earthly existence. Sometimes God sees fit to shorten or lengthen this natural term of a given individual; then He adds to or takes away from the original measure of vitality. Various instances are quoted from the Bible.

Saadia describes also some circumstances attending death. Here, however, he does not speak as a philosopher, but as a believer in certain common views and traditions prevalent among the Jews and, in a modified form, among the Muhammedans. At the moment a person is to die—so the Talmud (*b.* 'Abōdāh Zārāh, 20*b*) says—the Angel of Death, all of yellowish fire and covered with eye-like spots of bluish fire, appears with a drawn sword aimed at the sick person. Beholding this sight, the victim is greatly shocked. At this moment the soul departs from the body. Saadia adduces several Bible verses to sustain the Talmudic tradition. The passage in the Talmud does not contain all the particulars given by Saadia.[509a] The fire and its different colors were added from some other source. Nor does the spontaneous departure of the soul accord with the Talmud. There it is a bitter drop falling from the sword into the open mouth of the terrified person that brings about death. That the soul is not seen when departing from the body is explained by the fact of its extreme fineness and transparency, as, for the same reason, we cannot see the substance of the heavenly spheres. "If one should take ten lamps of fine, transparent

[509] See Malter, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. II (1911-1912), pp. 454 f.

[509a] Moses Tachau, the severest critic of Saadia among the mediaeval Rabbis (see below, notes 597-616), does not fail to make use of this point against Saadia (see *Ozar Nechmad*, II, 93). For parallels from Greek and Christian mythology see Wünsche, Lewy's *Festschrift*, p. 97; Bender, *JQR.*, VI, 333 ff., 669 ff.; comp. below, notes 518, 603.

glass, put one into the other, and place a light in the middle, no one at a distance would think that the light is inside of ten lamps. Due to the transparency of the glass, his vision passes straight through it and strikes the light therein."[510] This illustration is to explain why the celestial lights alone are visible to the human eye, while the spheres in which they are set, and which, in ancient astronomy, were supposed to be ten in number, cannot be discerned. Indirectly it serves also as an explanation for the invisibility of the soul, which is of transparent material like the spheres.

Upon its departure from the body, the soul of the righteous soars up to heaven, while the soul of the wicked roams about restlessly. For this view the author quotes the authority of the Talmud (*b.* Shabbat, 152*b*) and supports it by verses from the Bible. During the process of the body's decomposition the departed souls are greatly disturbed on account of what happens to their former abode, just as one is overwhelmed by grief when he sees the house in which he lived for a long time laid in ruins. This suffering is greater in the homeless souls of the wicked. The separation between the souls and their former bodies lasts until the end of days, when, as was stated at the beginning, the number of souls, which God in His inscrutable wisdom has decided to create, is complete and the time for resurrection has arrived. All souls are then reunited with their bodies forever.

The ideas here touched upon belong to the large subject of Jewish eschatology. The author is not prepared to discuss such matters at this point, and refers the reader to the ninth chapter, which is devoted entirely to questions of eschatology. The closing portion of the present chapter is taken up with the refutation of the very ancient belief in the migration of the soul after death, which has found adherents in many sections of Jewry, especially the Ḳabbalists.[511] According to this theory the souls of the dead

[510] *'Amânât,* 205 (102), bottom.

[511] The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, which in Greek antiquity was represented by Empedocles and Pythagoras, found

migrate into other bodies, with which they start upon another earthly career. This may be repeated several times. Some aver that human souls often migrate into animal bodies and vice versa. The adherents of the theory adduce various arguments, among them that children often undergo great suffering, which can be explained only by assuming that they are expiating sins which their souls committed previously, while residing in other bodies.[511a] The Jewish followers of the doctrine try to prove it by numerous verses from Scripture. Saadia is strongly opposed to this idea in all its phases. He refutes the arguments adduced by the advocates of metempsychosis and shows that all the verses quoted in support of the belief have been misunderstood and misinterpreted. He concludes with the remark that he would have considered it beneath his dignity to polemicize against such crude and superstitious notions, were it not that he feared the evil influence they may have on the credulous.

(VII) Saadia distinguishes three periods in the life of the soul after its departure from the body. The first period is that of separation, during which, as was shown in the preceding chapter, the souls of the righteous abide in heaven "under the throne of God," while those of the wicked wander about, homeless. This period lasts until all souls to be created have passed through their earthly career. When this time arrives, creation is naturally discontinued. This does not mean that the world comes to an end, for then the second, more auspicious, period sets in, that of resurrection, when most of the departed souls will be reunited with their former bodies and begin life anew. As we shall see

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many adherents among the various peoples of the Orient. Anan, the founder of Ḳaraism, who borrowed the theory from the Muhammedans and spread it among the Jews, is said to have written a special work thereon; see Harkavy, *JE.*, I, 555, and in the place quoted above, note 499; The Ḳaraite Ḳirḳisâni (*Semitic Studies in Memory of Kohut,* pp. 449 f.) combats the belief in transmigration with weapons borrowed from Saadia; comp. also *ibidem,* p. 438, the references given by Poznański.

[511a] See above, note 490*a*, and below, note 525*a*.

later, Saadia identifies this period with the Messianic time. At the expiration of the second period the present material world will dissolve, and a new spiritual world will be created, into which *all* souls, including those of the wicked, will be transferred, the place in which they will remain forever—those of the righteous enjoying eternal bliss and those of the wicked doomed to everlasting suffering. This is the world called *'Olam ha-bâ'*, "the world to come," in which final judgment is held, and reward and punishment are meted out.

As the status of the soul during the first period has been treated of in the foregoing chapter, Saadia proceeds to consider the second period, to which he devotes the seventh chapter of his book, with the special title, "On the Resurrection of the Dead in this World." The addition "in this world[512]" is significant, as it expresses the principal contention of Saadia, who, in opposition to others, maintained that resurrection will take place in this world of ours as a natural phenomenon. He informs us at the beginning of the chapter that this is the view of the majority of the Jewish people, who take the predictions of our prophets in their plain, literal sense. Some, however, are of the opinion that the numerous verses in the Prophets promising resurrection simultaneously with the arrival of the Messiah, are to be taken figuratively, and that resurrection is to be one of the events of the "world to come," where the present order of things will be overthrown.

The demonstration of the correctness of his view, as against that of the minority mentioned, was to Saadia a matter of great importance, for it involved God's justice toward the people of Israel. According to Saadia the world to come is not intended for Israel alone. The pious of all nations will have a share in it, a view expressed in the Talmud.[513] What is Israel going to receive as a reward for

[512] In the presentation of this chapter I have combined the contents of both the Oxford and the St. Petersburg recensions; for all the details regarding these two texts see the *Bibliography*, below, p. 360.

[513] *Tosefta* (ed. Zuckermandel), *Synhedrin*, 13, 2; see Zunz, *Zur Geschichte*, pp. 371 ff.; Guttmann, p. 216.

all the indescribable sufferings and unparalled martyrdom experienced at the hands of its oppressors during the long period of its dispersion? Is it conceivable that a just and merciful God should select a particular people to be the guardian and disseminator of His Law and then abandon it to the cruelty and persecution of other nations, without any prospect of a reward for its unflinching loyalty? To be sure, our prophets assure us that Israel's redemption will come, that God will send His messenger, the Messiah, to vindicate the name of His people and restore it to its pristine glory. But what of all the innumerable martyrs who suffered torture and death for their faith and for the sanctification of God's name? What of all the pious men and women in Israel, who in ages gone by lived a life of misery and affliction because of their faithful adherence to the God-given religion? Have they lived and suffered in vain, and are they never to witness the vindication of their cause and the restoration of Israel? To say that the administration of justice is reserved entirely for the unknown world to come, as was partly assumed in the case of individuals, would be a very unsatisfactory solution of this problem. Our minds are not set at rest thereby, and they humbly demand that justice be done in this world.

It is by such reflections that we are strengthened in the belief that the Biblical promises of the revival of the dead are not mere metaphors, but are meant literally; that simultaneously with the advent of Israel's redeemer, the promised Messiah, the dead of the faithful and penitent of the nation, to the exclusion of those who led a wicked life and died unrepentant, will revive to see with their bodily eyes the redemption of their people and its rehabilitation on "the Mount of God."

Saadia, as a rationalist, naturally cannot stop here. The questions that crowd upon his mind and try to overthrow his belief are many. Is bodily resurrection a possibility? Is it at all conceivable that human bodies, after having been decomposed and dissolved into atoms for thousands of years, should unite again and reassume their original form?

Saadia admits that for those who believe in the eternity of the material world and the immutability of the laws of nature, resurrection is an impossibility. For us, however, the believers in monotheism, who recognize in God the Almighty Power that created all nature and keeps it under His control, the belief in resurrection does not involve more difficulties, nay involves even less, than the belief in a *creatio ex nihilo,* in which we all agree. Nature, as we know, does not destroy anything; it merely resolves the constituents of a given body into its original elements, which are indestructible. Now if we are all ready to believe that God has created even the elements out of nothing, why should we deny the possibility of His rebuilding bodies out of their original and undestroyed elements? We do not claim that the dispersed atoms will spontaneously join together and by a natural process, come to life again,[514] for we have never witnessed such a phenomenon in the realm of nature. What we say is that resurrection is one of the miracles which God, through His prophets, has promised to perform for His people at the time of their redemption. There is no obvious reason why we should deny the possibility of this miracle more than of all other miracles reported in the Bible, none of which appears more natural and more acceptable. The Bible even relates definite instances of the revival of the dead through the prophets Elijah (I Kings, 17, 22) and Elisha (II Kings, 4, 35), which belongs to the same category of miracles as resurrection.

Having thus disposed of the question from the point of view of reason, the author turns to the examination of the numerous Scriptural verses that have some bearing on the subject. A large number of these verses, as the whole famous vision of Ezekiel, chapter 37, the prophecies of Isaiah (26, 19), Daniel (12, 1-3), and others, positively express the promise of a bodily resurrection in this world.

[514] This is found only in Landauer's text, p. 213, ll. 12-13; comp. the parallel passage in the other recension, Steinschneider-*Festschrift,* p. 100 (*Emūnōt,* p. 107), ll. 5-10.

The opponents of this belief maintain that all these verses must be taken in a metaphorical sense, and they adduce various instances of similar verses which are commonly taken as metaphors. Saadia, although in many other relations he himself resorts to metaphorical interpretations, denies the admissibility of the method in the present case. In this connection he establishes a famous exegetical canon which has proved of great importance in the development of Bible study, through its acceptance by eminent commentators of subsequent ages.[515] According to this canon we are entitled, or even in duty bound, to interpret the Scriptural word in a figurative sense under four conditions only: first, when the literal meaning contradicts a truth based on sense-perception; second, when it is absolutely incompatible with the dictates of reason; third, when it is in positive conflict with another passage of the Bible; and, fourth, when it denies a well-established ancient tradition. For each of these cases he adduces examples from the Bible. In the case of the verses bearing on resurrection none of these rules applies, and we are therefore constrained to take them in their literal sense. If we were at liberty to construe Scriptural passages indiscriminately as metaphors, there would eventually be nothing left to construe in a plain natural sense. We could easily take all the narratives of the Bible and all its laws and

[515] The question of the permissibility of allegorical interpretations (*ta'wîl,* in the language of Ibn Tibbon סבראה) was hotly disputed among the various schools of the Muhammedan theologians, especially the *'Ash'arites* and *Mu'tazilites;* see Goldziher, in *Die Kultur der Gegenwart,* I, 5 (1913), p. 305, and in the periodical *Der Islam,* III (1912), pp. 226-230. From the Muhammedans the problem was taken over first by the Ḳaraites, Anan (Harkavy, *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur,* Berlin, 1899, p. 113) and some of his followers. A discussion of the subject as viewed by the mediæval Jewish philosophers requires a monograph. As to Saadia, whom Maimonides follows, see Bacher, *Die Bibelexegese der jüdischen Religionsphilosophen,* etc., pp. 8 ff.; Guttmann, *Saadia,* pp. 21, 221, n. 1, and (with reference to Maimonides) in Isr. Lewy's *Festschrift,* pp. 319 f. (*Moses ben Maimon,* II, 210 f.); above, note 446; comp. כתאב אלרסאיל, edited by J. Brill, Paris, 1871, p. 57.

precepts as mere figures of speech. For instance, the law, "ye shall kindle no fire on the Sabbath day" might be interpreted to mean ye shall not go to war on the Sabbath day, for in Numbers, 21, 28 war is designated as fire. The law that forbids taking from a nest the "mother-bird with the young" (Deuteronomy, 22, 6) might mean that in conquering an enemy we should not kill the women with their children, for the same phrase is used in the latter sense (Hosea, 10, 14).[516] Saadia cites numerous other passages for further illustration, showing the absurdity of such interpretations.

The opponents of the idea of bodily resurrection point, however, to several verses in Scripture that seem to bear out their view, *e. g.* (Psalms, 78, 39): "And he remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passeth away and cometh not again"; or (*ib.*, 103, 15-16): "As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more"; further (Job, 7, 9-10): "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goes down to the grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more"; and (*ib.*, 14, 12): "Man lieth down and riseth not, till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be roused out of their sleep." In answer thereto Saadia contends that these and similar verses have no reference to the question of resurrection; they merely emphasize the weakness and transitoriness of human life, the inability of man to fight death or to rise after death.[517] It should be remarked that Saadia here disagrees with the Talmud (Baba Batra, 16*a*), where the verse from Job, 7, 9 is quoted as a proof that Job denied resurrection.[518]

[516] The same arguments, applied to verses of the Ḳorân, are used by the Muhammedan theologian Faḫr al-Dîn Râzi (13th century), see Goldziher, in *Der Islam*, III, 228 f.

[517] The same interpretation he gives in his Commentary on Job in the verses here cited.

[518] For other instances of Saadia's deviation from the Talmud and the Midrash see above, notes 462, 482, 509*a* and below, note 603;

In addition to the proofs from the Bible, Saadia then quotes several passages from the Talmud corroborative of his view. The latter, he remarks, are too many for all to be quoted. The closing portion of the chapter is devoted to the answer of ten questions that either were asked or might be asked, in connection with the idea of resurrection. Some of these are: Who will be excluded from resurrection? Answer: Only the heretics and atheists among the Israelites who do not repent before death. Will the revived dead die again? Answer: They will not die, but live through the whole second—that is, the Messianic—period, until the beginning of the third period, when they will be transferred to the eternal world to come. Will the earth hold so many people? In answer to this question Saadia enters upon a detailed computation, which results in the assurance that a hundred and fiftieth part of the surface of the earth would be sufficient to supply the needs of all. It should be remarked in passing that Saadia's computation is based on his belief that the time of the Messianic redemption was not very distant.[518a] The other questions refer mostly to the mode of life which will obtain among the people during those blessed times. (See below, pp. 244 ff.

In one of the two different recensions[519] of this chapter the author concludes with the expression of the hope that the belief in resurrection as here explained may prove a source of comfort to his oppressed people and strengthen their faith in God. Finally he utters the prayer that in

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Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xxxvi, n. 11; Davidson, *Saadia's Polemic against Hiwi Al-Balkhi,* New York, 1915, p. 42, n. 96; p. 48, n. 126; p. 54. n. 157; p. 58, n. 177; comp. also J. N. Epstein, *Der gaonäische Kommentar zur Ordnung Tohoroth,* Berlin, 1915, pp. 38, 41, bottom. The *Kommentar* in question is essentially a work of Saadia; see below, p. 342, no. 1.

[518a] There is much speculation as to the year of redemption according to Saadia's Computations; see the references given below, notes 521, 522.

[519] The so-called St. Petersburg recension (edited by Bacher in the Steinschneider-*Festschrift*), which was followed by Ibn Tibbon.

reward thereof he, too, may be found worthy of beholding that glorious time.

(VIII) In the foregoing chapter Saadia endeavored to prove that the resurrection will be a special feature of the Messianic redemption of Israel. In so far, resurrection presupposes the coming of the Messiah. As a matter of reasoning, the belief in the final redemption of Israel is based on the supposition that it would be wholly incompatible with God's justice to abandon His people to its fate forever, after having chosen it as the bearer and promulgator of His truth, for which it was to endure the greatest sufferings. The same argument, as we have seen, served the author also as a proof for resurrection. This is quite natural, as resurrection is, in his view, an incident of the Messianic time. On the whole the matter might have rested here; but owing to the magnitude of the Messianic idea and its national importance for the Jewish people, the author devotes a special chapter to it, entitled "On the (final) Redemption," in which he proposes to discuss the subject in its manifold phases.

In an opening paragraph, the author, as is his wont, refers to the explicit statements of the prophets, containing definite promises of Israel's deliverance; mentions briefly the argument of reason given before; and depicts, in a highly poetic style, the power of Almighty God, as it manifests itself in nature and in the history of mankind—all of which tends to show that for Him the liberation of a people can involve no difficulty. The nations around us, who see our misfortune, mock and deride us and consider our hope as foolish; but this is because they have never gone through our experience and have never believed as strongly as we do. "A person that has never seen seed sown, when for the first time he sees the husbandman throwing grain into the fissures of the soil to sprout there, is apt to consider the sower a fool, and will realize his own ignorance only in the time of harvesting, when he sees that a measure cast forth produces twenty or thirty measures. Scripture says: 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.' (Psalms 126, 5.) Furthermore a person

that has never witnessed the bringing up of a child, when he observes a father undergoing all sorts of hardships in order to give his son a good education, may ridicule him, saying, What is the use of all this? But after the child has grown up, has become a scholar or a philosopher, a governor or a general, then the taunter realizes that it was he that made himself ridiculous." [520] The great sufferings of Israel have likewise only a preparatory character and an educational purpose. Out of her present decline will spring new life and fresh vigor, to the amazement of those who had held her in contempt; for, says Scripture: "The Lord thy God is a merciful God, He will not fail thee nor destroy thee." (Deuter., 4, 31.)

Proceeding from the prophecies of Daniel, chapters 10-12, Saadia makes an attempt to fix the time for the coming of the expected Messiah. His computation is too complicated to be reproduced. Various theories have been advanced by recent scholars [521] as to the year of redemption resulting from these computations, but none of them is satisfactory. The matter has been treated elsewhere [522] in full. Saadia adopts the opinion of the Talmud (*p.* Ta'anit, I, 1; *b.* Synhedrin, 97*b*), that the appointed time for the redemption of Israel will be adhered to only in case the Israelites do not prove themselves worthy of a speedier deliverance from the exile. If they repent of their sins and better their conduct, they will not have to wait for the extreme time-limit. If, however, the appointed time is reached, and the conduct of the Jewish people does not warrant their deliverance, God will bring upon them the persecutions of base kings, who will expel them from their countries, and by all sorts of oppressive laws will drive them to despair, so that many of them will leave their faith. Those who, after this purifying process, remain steadfast and loyal

[520] *Amânât*, p. 232 (Em., p. 119); comp. Munk, *Notice*, etc., p. 27; Michel A. Weill, *L'Univers Israélite*, 1870, pp. 271 ff.

[521] See Poznański, *MGWJ.*, XLIV (1900), 400 ff.

[522] See Malter, "Saadia's Messianic Computation," in Neumark's *Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy*, Cincinnati, 1919, pp. 45-59.

to their religion will then be redeemed. Using traditions supposed to have originated in the earlier Geonic period, Saadia mentions a king by the name of Armilus,[523] who is to bring terrible suffering upon the house of Israel. This king is in all probability identical with Romulus, the founder of Rome, which stands for the Church. According to the Talmud (Sukkah, 52*a*, *b*) a scion of the tribe of Joseph will appear as the Messianic precursor of the real Messiah of the house of David and conquer Jerusalem for the Jewish people; but king Armilus will wrest it from him, kill him and many of his followers, and usher in the period of the great persecutions. Finally the real Messiah will arrive and wreak vengeance on the persecutor. Saadia finds all the details of these great struggles and of the ultimate victory of Israel predicted in numerous verses quoted from the prophets, on the basis of which he draws a glorious picture of Israel's ultimate salvation.

Having thus established his view that the Messianic predictions of the prophets refer without exception to a future time in which they are sure to be fulfilled, the author, in a lengthy, controversial paragraph, feels constrained to turn against those who maintain a totally different opinion. There are some so-called Jews,[524] he says sarcastically, who

[523] See Ginzberg, *JE.*, *s. v. Armilus,* also in אוצר ישראל, II, 201.

[524] Various views have been advanced as to the persons here alluded to. In particular, see for the literature Kaufmann, *Attributenlehre,* p. 84; Guttmann, *Saadia,* p. 214, n. 1; Poznański, *MGWJ.*, 1895, pp. 441 ff., and later in *Semitic Studies in Memory of Kohut,* Berlin, 1897, p. 438 (comp. also his *Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah,* p. 98, and *ZfhB.*, III, 176); see also David Joel, *Der Aberglaube,* etc., Breslau, 1883, II, 3; Horovitz, *Psychologie,* p. 69. Saadia uses the same phrase in his argument against the believers in the transmigration of the soul, *Am.*, p. 207, bottom, *Em.*, p. 103 (see above, note 511) and in the *Sefer ha-Galui* (see Malter, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. III (1912-1913), p. 497, l. 9). To my mind neither here nor there was any particular sect meant by Saadia. Adherents of such theories were found among the Rabbanites as well as among the Ḳaraites and other sectaries (see below, note 577). This, however, is not the place to prove it; I have dealt with the question in detail in my forthcoming edition of the *Emūnōt.*

claim that most of the Messianic promises of the Bible were actually fulfilled during the time of the Second Temple, while the others, which were not fulfilled, were definitely withdrawn, because they were originally made on the condition that the religious conduct of the Israelites would prove them deserving of the benefits intended for them, which was not the case. Saadia strongly opposes this theory, and proves that it is based on false premises and on a misunderstanding of the Biblical passages. He points in particular to fifteen characteristic features of the Messianic time as described in the Bible, and shows that none applies to the condition of the Jews during the period of the Second Temple and the times following it. For instance, we are told that in the Messianic time all humanity will believe in one God (Zechariah, 14, 9), that all nations will be free, none of them being forced to serve the interests of the other (Isaiah, 62, 8), that all wars between the nations will be abolished, and perfect peace will reign all over the world (*ib.*, 2, 4), and so forth. But what we actually see to this day is the very opposite of such conditions.

These arguments, Saadia continues, hold good also against the adherents of Christianity, for they too claim that the Messianic promises have been fulfilled in the past, with the only difference that according to them the Messianic time did not begin with the period of the Second Temple, but 135 years before its destruction—that is, with the birth of Jesus. There are several other objections to be raised against the Christian theory in particular. Saadia therefore devotes the closing portion of the eighth chapter to the refutation of the Messianic doctrine of the Christian religion, showing especially the mistakes made by the followers of the Church in interpreting certain passages of the Bible as referring to Jesus of Nazareth.

(IX) The ninth chapter, "On Reward and Punishment in the World to Come," concludes Saadia's eschatological studies. In accordance with the method adopted by him, he opens the chapter with the statement that the Bible tells us of the existence of a future world in which all differ-

ences will be adjusted (Malachi, 3, 17-18). The proofs thereof from reason, Scripture and tradition, he says, have been adduced in previous chapters. There are, however, additional proofs requiring special attention in this place. From the point of view of reason, to start with, it appears impossible that "the amount of happiness God intends for humanity should consist exclusively in the pleasures and enjoyments attainable in this world, for every material good is counterbalanced by an evil that lurks behind it, all happiness is neutralized by hardship, all pleasure by pain, and all enjoyment by grief; nay, the evil usually outweighs the good. As this is obvious, it is absurd that a wise God should have appointed these delusive worldly pleasures as the final goal of our strivings. Another abode must be in store for us, in which perfect life and unalloyed happiness will be ours. Moreover, among the people I have met I have never found any that were fully satisfied and content with this world, even if they had attained the greatest power and the highest degree of dignity."[525] This inevitable dissatisfaction, Saadia asserts, is an inner voice which tells us that this world with all its restlessness and vicissitudes is not the final stage of our life, that there must be something that surpasses it in grandeur and sublimity. Hence the constant longing of our souls for a good unknown, the instinctive yearning for a world undefinable. He adduces, in further elaboration of the argument, the conflict that arises between conscience and inclination in the presence of temptation—as to commit adultery or theft, or to take vengeance on an enemy, and the like. On such occasions it would be quite natural for us to yield to temptation and indulge in pleasure. But God has implanted in us a certain instinct which invariably makes us realize what is morally wrong and sinful and bids us refrain from the evil. We often follow that better instinct and practice renunciation, though it causes great pain and suffering. Is it proper to assume that God

[525] *'Amânât*, p. 255, bottom, *Em.*, p. 130.

created men with consciences, the immediate causes of such suffering, without providing also some reward for the suffering? God has likewise equipped us with a sense of duty and the faculty of realizing that, for example, justice, honesty, and uprightness are good and commendable. In most cases, however, if we abide by our moral duty and carry out the demands of justice, we expose ourselves to the enmity of men; we must suffer persecution and even death. It appears impossible that God, who created in us love for justice, should let us perish for it without rewarding us therefor. Other instances are mentioned in addition, which make it clear that happiness and misfortune are not properly distributed in this world, and some sort of adjustment is our due. In some cases we are not in a position to administer justice even if we so desired. If a person commits one murder and another one commits ten, we can do no more than execute them both. How are the nine additional murders punished?

These arguments, obviously based on general reasoning, are followed by thirteen proofs taken from Scriptures. The first six are merely inferences from what happened to greater or lesser personages, as related in the Bible. Thus (1), Isaac was ready to be burned on the altar, because God had so ordered; Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah allowed themselves to be thrown into the fire, rather than worship an idol; and Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, because he prayed to God; (2) Moses endured the greatest hardships while ministering to the needs of his people, yet he was denied the privilege of entering the Holy Land and enjoying the fruit of his labors; (3) Elijah procured food for others (i Kings, 17), while he himself had to starve (*ib., c.* 19), and Elisha revived the dead, but died himself; (4) the Sodomites were utterly destroyed because of their sins, while other peoples, just and wicked alike, prosper; (5) the Israelites were exiled because of idolatry, other nations worship idols and remain undisturbed; (6) innocent children perished in the flood of Noah, and likewise in the battle against the Midianites it was ordained that children be

killed (Numbers, 31, 17).[525a] All this makes God appear as a decidedly arbitrary and unjust ruler of the world, unless we assume that a proper reward is meted out after death.

The remaining seven proofs are based on numerous Bible verses, which, according to the author's interpretation, contain unmistakable allusions to the future world. All these verses are arranged according to their contents under seven general headings—*e. g.*, verses describing life and death, or containing promises and threats, or referring to records kept in heaven of the deeds of men, and so forth. Each group is construed as a proof that the belief in the world to come has found expression in the Bible. There is the great difficulty that in the most important passages of the Bible in which the Israelites are admonished to obedience or warned against sin, as, for instance, in the famous Exhortations (Tōkāḥōt), Leviticus, 33 and Deuteronomy, 28, only promises of material happiness are held out, or misfortunes of a physical nature announced. The reason therefor, Saadia explains, is twofold. We find, in the first place, that the Torah never expatiates upon things that are self-evident. The belief in reward and punishment after death is, as we have seen, demanded by reason. If men sin, it is mostly not because they deny the existence of a future world, or because they do not care for its rewards, or are not afraid of punishment therein, but merely because of weakness of character. In order to restrain them from sin, it will not suffice to remind them of the hereafter. That is something of which they are fully conscious. It is only the promise of prosperity or the threat of severe punishment in this world that will prove effective. Secondly, it was the purpose of the Bible, as a book intended for the education of the people, to give ample directions in matters that concern the immediate present or the near future. The Biblical passages referred to have relation to the time when the Israelites were about to conquer the Holy Land. It was necessary to describe in full detail the happy conditions

[525a] See above, notes 490[a], 511[a].

which would obtain in the promised land if they were faithful to the laws and ordinances of God, and on the other hand, to warn them of the sure failure awaiting them, if they disregarded these. There was thus no need at that time to refer in any way to what was going to happen in the world to come. Such things are briefly alluded to in various passages of the Bible, as shown before.

As to the proofs from traditional literature, Saadia continues, the passages are too many to quote all of them. Only five passages from the Talmud and two from the Targum on the Pentateuch are adduced. The passages occurring in the Targum on the Prophets are likewise too numerous for quotation. The existence of a future world is thus established from every point of view.

Over two-thirds of the entire chapter are now devoted to the discussion of ten (actually eleven)[526] eschatological questions, nearly all of which had been briefly considered by the author at the end of the seventh chapter. Here each point is taken up in a different arrangement and treated at great length. Owing to the latter fact Saadia's presentation cannot be reproduced here. The questions at issue are: the nature of reward and punishment in the hereafter (counted as two); are the categories time and space applicable to the future world? (also counted as two); are reward and punishment eternal, or only for a certain period, according to the gravity of the case? (two); (7) if reward and

[526] The Hebrew text (p. 134) is here quite corrupt, and the order of the questions much confused by uninformed commentators, especially Dines in the edition used here by us (see the *Bibliography*, p. 371, no. 5), who, however, puts the responsibility on the "printers and copyists, who did not understand the text" as well as he. Saadia, with his particular habit of playing with numbers, announces the discussion of *ten* questions, but *de facto* enumerates *thirteen*, of which he actually discusses *eleven*, and yet by an uncommon twist of logic insists at the end of the paragraph (*Am.*, p. 279, l. 13, *Em.*, p. 142, l. 21) that he had dealt with "ten only." The reason for this insistence on ten is that the questions here treated are to be equal in number, as they are also in content, to those treated in the last portion of the seventh chapter (above, p. 236); comp. notes 487, 528.

punishment are eternal (Saadia's actual assumption), how about the reward and punishment for a single act? (8) If, as is again assumed by the author, the rewards and punishments, even for single meritorious acts or single reprehensible acts are to last eternally, the difference then being one of degree only, what about the great variety in classes that would result therefrom? Are all the righteous and all the wicked ranked in accordance with the number of merits or demerits they have to their account? (9) Which class of the wicked has to expect the severest punishment? (10) Will the righteous and the wicked be able to behold one another in the hereafter? In addition [527] to these ten points the author discusses the question whether the righteous will continue to be under obligation to worship God and to obey certain laws. Answering in the affirmative, he refers the reader to the seventh [528] chapter, where he stated that for such worship and obedience they will be additionally rewarded, and that the righteous of the world to come will never sin. As to the wicked, being in a state of suffering and affliction, they, Saadia says, will not be put under any obligation.

With a few exceptions the answers to the foregoing eschatological questions are all based on very numerous passages from Scripture, to which a Talmudic passage is occasionally added for corroboration. At the end Saadia admits that to attempt a detailed description of the real nature of reward and punishment would be presumptuous. The world to come must needs be totally different from ours, so that we have no proper standard of appreciation. Nor is it desirable that we should know exactly the reward and punishment of a certain deed or misdeed. This would

[527] See the preceding note.

[528] *'Amânât,* p. 228, l. 9, Steinschneider-*Festschrift,* p. 111, *Em.,* p. 116 (eighth question). Both the Arabic (p. 279, l. 10) and the Hebrew text (p. 142, l. 18) refer to the "end of the *eighth* chapter," which is a mistake, perhaps of Saadia himself. In the eighth chapter (*Am.,* p. 246, l. 8; *Em.,* p. 125, l. 9 from below) the matter is mentioned incidentally only, and it is not at the *end* of the chapter; comp. above, note 487.

interfere with freedom of action. We may hope, however, that in the Messianic time, intermediary between this world and the world to come, we shall be enlightened also about the latter.

So far as he felt justified by the indications contained in certain Scriptural verses, the author had previously attempted to describe the nature of the future world. According to these verses, as interpreted by Saadia, God, at the proper time, will create a sublime essence which will fill the world with magnificent light and splendor. On the souls of the righteous this light will have the most beneficent effect. It will imbue them with the knowledge of things divine, bringing them nearer to the presence of God and the heavenly hosts, and making them participate in a life of continuous joy and happiness. On the wicked it will have the opposite effect, dazzling and burning them eternally.[528a] These two effects are symbolically designated in traditional literature as *Gan Eden* (paradise) and *Ge-Hinnom* (Gehenna, hell), because the former was known from the story of Adam and Eve as a place of pleasantness, and the latter is mentioned as a place of abomination (near Jerusalem; Jeremiah, 7, 32, 19, 13). There will be neither time (that is, division into days and nights) nor space (that is, heaven and earth) nor atmospheric air in the world to come, as the people, though consisting of body as well as of soul, will not have to subsist on material food and will not need to breathe. God will keep them alive by that fine light-shedding essence which he is to create. We find the same exemplied in the life of Moses, who was with God for forty days and nights without food, sustained solely by the divine light (Exodus, 34, 28-29).

Saadia's answers to most of the other eschatological questions have been indicated above. The eighth question is answered in the affirmative, but only seven different degrees among the righteous and correspondingly seven among the

[528a] This entire exposition, for which Saadia gives no source, is based on the passage (Nedarim, 8*b*) : אין גיהנם לעוה"ב אלא הקב"ה מוציא חמה מנרתיקה צדיקים מתרפאין בה ורשעים נדונין בה; comp. Theodor, *Bereschit Rabba,* Berlin, 1912, p. 46, n. 5.

wicked, are described by the author, as he finds them suggested in Bible verses. By way of answering the ninth question, he points to the atheists and polytheists and the perpetrators of grave religious sins unrepentant at death. The righteous and the wicked will see one another (tenth question) from a distance; the former, among themselves, however, will meet only when they happen to be of equal or not greatly different rank, while among the latter, occupied as they will be with expiation for their sins, no association, the author conjectures, will be possible.

Saadia's philosophic system is here brought to a close. As a summary of his eschatological views a few of the leading thoughts may be restated. Soul and body are a unit. The soul is created at the moment the body is completed and takes its seat in the heart. Death separates the two. They remain in separation until the Messianic time. At that time the bodies will be resurrected and will reunite with their souls. Resurrection is restricted to the pious ones in Israel as a special reward for their sufferings; the wicked of Israel, as well as the dead of other nations will not rise from the graves. Their souls and bodies will remain separated until the Messianic period, lasting many generations, is over. At the close of the Messianic period the present world will be destroyed and a new eternal world created. This will be the world of final judgment. In it the wicked of Israel, who did not see the Messianic time, as well as the dead of all nations will come to life again, though under a different, as yet not fully intelligible system. The righteous of Israel, who lived through the Messianic period will be transferred bodily to that world. The righteous of all other nations will also have their share in the reward of the eternal world to come.

(X) The last chapter of the *'Amânât,* "About That which is the Best for Man to do in this World," is not a continuation of the thoughts developed in the chapters preceding it; nor does it in any other way fit into the general plan of the work before us. It has been suggested that the work was written originally in separate essays under special titles, with a view

of later combining and arranging them so as to form a systematic whole.[529] The present essay, dealing with ethics, is related in content to chapters 4 and 5 which deal with the principal ethical problems as part of the system of the Jewish religion. The great latitude indulged in by the author in treating the subject of this essay made its inclusion in the body of the book appear inexpedient. It was therefore appended here with the avowed intention of giving to the reader some practical advice as to the course he should choose in order to be able to live in conformity with the religious doctrines laid down in the work.[530]

As is the author's wont, he opens the chapter with a few general remarks leading to the subject under consideration, in which he first points out that plurality and variety are the very nature of all created beings, just as absolute unity is an essential attribute of the Creator. All the units we see in nature are only apparently such. Upon closer examination we realize that what appears to our eyes as a unit is merely an aggregate of a multitude of smaller composites, constituting a body, an organism. So it is in the whole of

[529] See above, note 456.

[530] Landauer's contention (Introduction, p. xx), that this chapter was not considered at all in the original plan of Saadia, and did not belong to the book, is disputed by Schreiner (*RÉJ.*, XXII, 70) on the basis of a passage which is quoted by Moses Ibn Ezra (*Kitâb al-Muḥâḍarah*) as occurring in chapter *nine* of the *'Amânât,* but is found in the present chapter *ten.* Schreiner therefore suggests that it was the *seventh* chapter (on resurrection) that was originally excluded from the plan of the book. This is not at all conclusive, as in the time of Moses Ibn Ezra (12th century) there may have existed copies of the *'Amânât* in which the seventh chapter (in the so-called *second* recension) formed a separate part, or was not included at all; comp. Bacher in the Steinschneider-*Festschrift,* (German part), pp. 219-226. We must also reckon with the possibility of a mistake in the text of Ibn Ezra. Be that as it may, it is safe to assume that both the seventh and the tenth chapters belonged to the original plan of the author, as is evidenced also by the table of contents at the end of the Introduction, and by a passage in chapter V of the work (p. 179, top, *Em.,* p. 89) ; comp. Guttmann, p. 258, n. 1.

organic and inorganic nature and even in the superlunary world, for the heavenly bodies, too, are composed of various parts.

Precisely the same is true as regards our moral and intellectual world. Our entire thinking apparatus and our physical instinct are not units tending and working in one direction only. Each is a combination of multifarious thoughts, or tendencies, or inclinations, making up our diversified psychic world. As a tree would not be a tree by reason of its leaves alone, man would not be what he is, if he consisted only of one or the other of his components, and as the heavens do not shed their light through one star only, so a single instinct would not afford us the full variety of human life. Even in the sphere of human activities we must, for all purposes, make use of a combination of things. In building, manufacturing, and preparation of food for our sustenance, we must select our material from various quarters, in order to assure success.

By overlooking this truth most people go morally wrong. Contrary to the lessons of nature they bind themselves to one theory of life or follow a particular inclination to the neglect or exclusion of all others, with the result that they defeat their own purpose and go to wrack and ruin even physically. From among the many methods of living adhered to by the majority of people, the author selects thirteen for careful consideration, in order to exemplify to the reader the moral and material dangers that lurk behind each one, if pursued exclusively. A cursory perusal of these thirteen doctrines of life as presented by the author, makes it at once doubtful whether they had all come to his knowledge from personal observation. Some of them, as we shall see, are of such a nature that while they may at all times find here and there an individual advocate, they would hardly ever or anywhere become the common view of a larger, organized section of a people, and thus deserve to be raised to the dignity of a doctrine, as is here proposed by the author. Doubtless, Saadia has here again fallen under the spell of his peculiar

fondness for numbers.[531] A brief reproduction of these doctrines under their respective headings will suffice to make this clear.

(1) The doctrine of the *hermits,* who teach that the best course for a man to pursue is to turn his back on the world, isolate himself in the mountains, and weep and mourn over the misery of human life. They repudiate marriage and all pleasures of life, and subsist on whatever they happen to find near them, until they are relieved by death of their wretched existence.

(2) The doctrine of *sots* and *gluttons,* who hold that good eating and drinking is the highest purpose in life. With the greatest enthusiasm they picture the wonderful feeling after a rich meal and the cheerful effect produced by wine. All human enterprise, they say, has as its sole purpose the gratification of the stomach, all friendships and social enjoyments are based on conviviality. Saadia is equally extravagant in depicting the opposite effects of this epicurism.

(3) The doctrine of the *voluptuaries,* who aver that the gratification of sexual desire is the highest aim one should strive after. "Sexual intercourse," they assert, "is the consummation of human happiness, it cheers the soul, drives away all worry and melancholy, and, what is more, it maintains all existence." Saadia opposes this doctrine most emphatically, showing the sad results of excessive sexuality.

(4) The doctrine of *lovers.*[532] Love is the most exalted feeling a human being is capable of. To experience love

[531] See above, notes 473, 526, Guttmann, p. 263, n. 2. For some of the theories various parallels were adduced by Guttmann from Greek and other sources.

[532] For this doctrine see in particular Guttmann, 269-273, who quotes the parallels from Plato. So far as I know, it has never been noticed that what is here reported by Saadia is found in the *Apophthegms* of the famous translator of Greek works, Ḥonein b. 'Isḥâk (died 873), which were translated from Arabic into Hebrew by Judah al-Ḥarizi (comp. Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* pp. 348 ff.). The Hebrew translation was edited by A. Loewenthal, under the title מוסרי הפילוסופים, Frankfurt a/M., 1896. Thus, on p. 25, no. 43, the theory that love is due to the influence of the stars is presented with

should therefore be one's highest pursuit in life. "Love ennobles the mind, purifies the character, and transports the soul with joy." The followers of this view further theorize that "love is an extremely delicate substance produced by nature and infused into the human heart, originally through an incidental *coup d'oeil* and, once there, it assumes the aspect of a feeling of hope and desire. Through this feeling the substance becomes firmly rooted in the heart, then other elements (sexual passion) are added to the original substance, which make it endure. They even declare that love is due to the influences of the stars: If two people were born in the ascendant of two stars facing each other in full or in part and both standing under the influence of one zodiacal sign, the two persons will attract one another on sight. They go still further and assert that love is a divine institution. The souls, so runs their theory, were created in the form of globes, each globe consisting of two souls. Then the globes were divided into two equal halves and each half placed in some human being. When a person possessing the one half of a certain globe happens to meet the person who possess the other half of that globe, the two feel irresistibly drawn toward one another by love. Finally they venture to ascribe to love a religious significance, contending that God affected men with this powerful passion in order to make them suffer humiliations and thus learn to be humble and to submit to His will."

Saadia argues against this panegyric of love with exceptional vehemence, and even excuses himself for discussing

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full detail in the name of Plato, while on p. 38, no. 64, the theory of the "globes" is given in the name of Ptolemy (בטלמיוס, which is a mistake for אפלטון, see Steinschneider, *l. c.*, p. 353, n. 687); comp. also p. 36, no. 9, another theory in the name of Galen. Ḥonein is probably the source of Saadia. This is strongly supported by the fact that the description of the origin of love (a substance sunk into the heart) and of its bad effects (melancholia and coma), especially the latter, are found in the *Apopthegms* of Ḥonein (p. 35, no. 10) almost verbally, under the heading מוסר[י] איפוקראט, "moral sentences of Hippocrates." Ḥonein was the source also of Johanan Alemano, שער החשק, *ed.* Halberstadt, 1862, *fol.* 29*a*.

so base a conception of life. The reason for his particular objection to the love-doctrine is that, as becomes apparent from some of his arguments, its eulogizers, as he knew them from Greek sources through the medium of Arabic, did not confine their praise to love between different sexes, but included the abomination of sodomy.[533]

(5) The doctrine of *materialists,* who advocate the accumulation of wealth. "They insist that the only proper course for man to take is the pursuit of money. They base their erroneous[534] view on the fact that all the pleasures and necessities of life can be obtained only with money, that all business transactions, government affairs, social relations, matrimony, and so forth center around it." In opposition thereto, Saadia describes the great evils resulting from the hunt after money: The nervous strain and restlessness, the deterioration of the moral character through the oppression of the weaker, the utter disregard of truth and honesty,[535] and the like. Nor should the dangers attending the possession of wealth be overlooked. Wealth arouses the envy of the poor and invites maltreatment and extortion by the mighty. Finally, its possession is never assured; often it happens that a degenerate son throws to the wind the ill-gotten fortune of his father.

(6) The doctrine of those who see the greatest human happiness in the possession of *children.* "Children are the joy and the delight of their parents, the only object of one's sincere love and affection, a treasure and comfort in old

[533] See Guttmann, p. 269. This is also evident from Saadia's argument, that "if love had the origin they claim for it, we should never find that Zaid would love 'Amr without 'Amr's reciprocating his love" (*'Am.* p. 269, l. 3; in *Em.,* p. 150, the names Reuben and Simeon are substituted, as usual, for Zaid and 'Amr).

[534] For והשלמת, in the Hebrew text (p. 151) read והַשְׁלוֹם (hif'il of שלה), to delude, mislead, not והטעו, as proposed by Guttmann, p. 273, n. 3.

[535] The Hebrew text (p. 152, l. 6) has here העברת המועדים, which means "breaking of promises." Guttmann read the latter word as plural of מוֹעֵד, festival, and translated accordingly (*Übertretung der religiösen . . . . Gebote*).

age, the only ones who remember us in love when we are dead." Saadia shows the other side of the medal. He points to the great difficulties in supplying children's needs and in giving them proper education, without which, he says, they are no blessing; recalls the dangers of disease and death, and of the disgrace that depraved sons or wayward daughters may bring upon their parents; and concludes with the citation of a passage from the Book of Sirach,[536] which relates to the latter point.

(7) The doctrine of those who maintain that one's sole occupation in life should be making the *earth* habitable (ישוב העולם), especially the cultivation of the soil, because all life depends upon the produce of mother earth. Besides, occupation with building and agriculture invigorates mind and body, induces thrift and procures prosperity. Saadia admits in general the importance of agriculture, but ridicules the idea that occupation therewith should be considered the sole source of human happiness.

(8) The doctrine of *longevity*. "The adherents of this doctrine claim that man's greatest care in this world should be the prolongation of his life, for through it he can accomplish all he desires in religious as well as in worldly matters. In order to attain long life, they advise, one should indulge in the pleasures of life with great moderation, always endeavor to keep up good spirits, and under all circumstances avoid dangerous situations." Saadia, in the first place, denies that longevity can be assured by following out the advice given. "We find that many people who live according to this prescription, die a premature death, while others who disregard it, reach a high age. Often people of strong physique die suddenly, while others of a delicate constitution live long." Moreover, it is not true that life, as such, is the highest good. He points to the innumerable and unavoidable troubles of life in its various stages, particularly to the infirmities of old age, and contends that this life should only be regarded as a preparation for life in the world eternal.

[536] See above, note 463.

(9) The doctrine of those who consider the acquisition of *power* and *dominion* as the foremost object in life. "They say that the ambition for the possession of greatness is a natural instinct, that the human mind resents humiliation and submission to others, that the consciousness of power cheers [537] the soul, raises the spirits, encourages enterprise, and widens the sphere of activity, and that without power and authority there would be no civilization." Saadia very pointedly remarks that these advocates of power knowingly suppress the real truth in the matter. Order and civilization are not effected by power and authority as such, but by the wisdom and foresight with which these are exercised. Authority based on power alone is a misfortune to the world and in the end also to the one who possesses it. A powerful but unwise individual will interfere with all human activities, and will arrogate to himself final authority on art and science, politics and religion. Should he succeed in usurping the government, he will turn everybody into an enemy, so that he will have to take even his meals under guard, "live as under the edge of a sword, as if his entire existence hung upon a hair."

(10) The doctrine of *vengeance*. "Its adherents praise the practice of vengeance as the most desirable occupation in life, because it frees the soul from worry, relieves mental strain, disposes of the necessity of constant scheming and plotting against the adversary, fills the avenger with satisfaction, and serves as a warning to other enemies." It is only natural that Saadia should strongly object to so unholy a view. For religious reasons and on general grounds, he denies that taking revenge ever gives lasting satisfaction. We may at times experience such feeling when our enemy falls through his own wrongdoings, but not when we have caused him to fall.

[537] Thus the Arabic text (p. 305, l. 12: תסרּהא); Ibn Tibbon (p. 154, line 6 from below) has מחזקת, strengthens. He must therefore have read תשדּהא, or תשדּרהא. The text of the second Arabic recension, followed by Ibn Tibbon, is here missing.

(11) The doctrine of *scholars*. "Some scholars believe that man's only occupation in this world should be study and research, for through it he will arrive at the knowledge of everything on earth, as the elements of nature and their compositions, and of much [538] that is in heaven, as the stars and the spheres. Besides, knowledge has its special charms, gladdening the soul and, like medicine, curing it of ignorance. Knowledge is the spiritual food of the soul and an ornament[539] to man, as jewels are to kings, and he who does not strive after it nor appreciate it, is not to be accounted fully a human being." Our author recognizes the elements of truth contained in this view, but opposes its exclusiveness and one-sidedness. Exclusive devotion to learning brings poverty and destitution, and thus makes the scholar dependent upon the good will of others. A poor scholar is despised, his opinion is neither sought nor relied upon, his learning, consequently, worthless. Should he try to maintain his independence and subsist on dry bread and the like, he will find that his learning deteriorates, for poor living is harmful to the mind. Moreover, the world cannot exist by the study of the sciences alone, without any practical occupation. The devotees of the scholarly view defeat their own purpose. Nor is it proper to advocate the study of the sciences [540] to the exclusion of the study of law and religion, for the knowledge

[538] The Hebrew text has in all editions הבורא, for which must be read הרבה.

[539] Here again all Hebrew editions have either ואינו, or ועינו, which makes no sense. Read: וזינו, which in the sense of *ornament* is used only in Arabic. Saadia quotes here Proverbs, 1. 9. In his Commentary on Proverbs *ad locum* (p. 16, top) he indeed says: אלעלם ואלדין גמיעא המא זין אלאנסאן, "learning and piety combined are the ornament of man."

[540] This is the meaning of Ibn Tibbon's חכמת היצירה, *i. e.*, "science of nature," or natural science, not as Guttmann, p. 280 (comp. p. 281, n. 1), translates: *speculative Wissenschaft*. Saadia speaks here of physics, not of metaphysics; for details see Malter, "Mediæval Hebrew Terms for Nature," in the Hermann Cohen-*Festschrift* (Judaica), pp. 253 ff.

of the sciences [541] is intended only as a means towards a better understanding of religious duties.

(12) The doctrine of *penance.* "There are many who proclaim that the best thing for a man to do is to devote himself solely to the worship of God. He should fast during the day and spend the nights in prayer and praise of God. He should relinquish all worldly occupations and leave it to God to provide him with all the necessaries of life. The worship of God affords us the greatest pleasure, thrills us with joy and rapture, and, besides, assures us of the reward of the world to come." Saadia here has the Christian monks in mind, and refutes their theory of life on the ground that a life of penance counteracts the purpose of God in creating the world. Mankind needs but to indulge in such practices for a single generation, and there would be no other generation to take its place, as we should all die of inanity, childless, and thus penance itself would exist no more. The laws and ordinances of any religion have a meaning only in connection with human activities. If we renounce life altogether for the sake of doing penance, we have no chance whatever to obey or disobey any of the religious precepts. What, then, is the object of doing penance? Its advocates might say that they would encourage others to attend to the practical needs of the world, while they would cling to their method of living; but then it is the others who are the real servants of God in carrying out His will, not they who persist in doing nothing. As to their reliance on God, that He will supply them with a livelihood, they might better rely on Him to provide them with the desired reward in the world to come without their incessant prayers for it.

(13) The doctrine of *idleness,* "Some teach that rest and inactivity is the best conduct in life, for it gives com posure and serenity to the soul, furthers digestion, promotes the growth of the body, and strengthens the senses.

[541] The editions have העולם (אהבת). According to the Arabic text we should expect זאת (אהבת), the latter word referring back to חכמת היצירה.

In all his toil and labor man looks forward with eagerness to the pleasure of rest which is to follow." "I find," says Saadia, "that these people are the most ignorant of all, and misunderstand their own words. The very idea of rest presupposes work and activity. Rest that is not preceded by work is a mere word. In reality such rest means sluggishness and indolence, and these lead to poverty and physical misery." Saadia enumerates ten special diseases caused by laziness, which might be interesting for the history of medicine, among them hernia, tumors, podagra, nephritis, and elephantiasis. Even those, he adds, whose needs are provided by others should not sit idle, but should work for the sake of work.

As said before, not all the theories here described were actually in vogue among the people of Saadia's acquaintance. In his desire to carry his point against all bias and narrow-mindedness in the conception of life, he selected for criticism a number of ideas found in the works of individual Greek and Muhammedan authors, who expressed themselves in favor of the one or the other, either incidentally or in expounding their systems of life. He labored the point that whether a particular course in life be vicious or virtuous, dogmatic and onesided adherence to it is bound to lead to failure; for in all walks of life it is prejudiced onesidedness that works moral and material injury. Saadia advises that man live in accordance with the requirements of his natural inclinations and propensities, but keep them under strict control. One must beware of exaggerations and excesses, carrying out all functions of life at the proper time and in the proper place, refraining therefrom when reason or religion so demands.[541a] Among the thirteen tendencies dis-

[541a] The underlying idea of Saadia's disquisition is the famous Aristotelian doctrine of the *Golden Mean*. Saadia is thus the first mediaeval Jewish thinker who utilized this doctrine for Jewish Ethics. He was followed by a host of others, particularly Maimonides, who has treated the subject in all its aspects. For further details see Malter, *Shem Tob Palquera, JQR., N. S.*, vol. I (1910-1911), pp. 160, n. 15; 484, n. 88; Gorfinkle, *the Eight Chapters of*

cussed, he designates those to despotism, vengeance, and indolence as absolutely immoral, and therefore entirely to be avoided. He compares his method with that of the physician who prescribes medicine composed of various ingredients in unequal parts according to the needs of the case, but excludes therefrom whatever he thinks to be positively injurious to the patient.

We might expect the foregoing remarks to be the end of the disquisition on the subject. The matter would seem to have been viewed from all sides, leaving nothing essential to be added. The author realizes this, but, he says, he deems it fit at the close of the chapter "to add gratuitously" a special paragraph in which he purposes to show that in the realm of nature, also, it is mixture and composition that produces the highest and most pleasing effects. This, he continues, will serve as an illustration of what was said above regarding our moral world and the necessity of employing jointly all our natural instincts and intellectual endowments in order to make life complete. He selects for this illustration the impressions made by the objects of nature on the senses of sight, hearing, and smell, leaving out the sense of taste, because too obvious, and that of touch, because, according to some ancient theory of physiology, it responds with pleasure only to a single quality, that of softness.[542] As to the sense of sight, we know that any elementary, unmixed color, as white, red, yellow, or black, is hard on the eyes, if they are persistently fixed upon it for some time. Besides, these colors do not produce any cheering effect on the soul. Only when they are mixed with others, the composition may

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Maimonides, New York, 1912, pp. 54 ff.; Guttmann, in Isr. Lewy's *Festschrift*, pp. 323 f. (*Moses ben Maimon*, II, 213); comp. above, note 399. As to the popularity of the doctrine among Muhammedan writers see Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 398.

[542] A contrary view regarding the sense of touch is held by Abraham Ibn Daûd; comp. Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Abraham Ibn Daud*, p. 82. For details see Kaufmann, *Die Sinne*, Leipzig, 1884, pp. 172 ff.

in various ways be soothing to the eye and stimulate the different faculties of the soul to action.[542a]

Saadia proceeds to describe the different effects certain combinations of colors have on the soul, the one producing vigor and strength, the other sadness and melancholy, and the like. The same holds true with regard to the sense of hearing. A single sound or tone has only one effect, and this one often unpleasant. Only the concord of different notes is capable of producing harmony and sweetness. Here again Saadia enters upon a detailed description of the eight fundamental musical tones and their intervals, or semitones, and defines the effect of certain musical compositions on soul and character. Finally, the sense of smell is taken up, and treated in a similar way, and he shows that in odors, too, the best results are achieved by combinations.[543]

If, as we have seen—so Saadia concludes—even in the physical world it is only through a proper distribution and co-ordination of forces that we arrive at the highest possible good, how much more is it desirable that we should follow the same method in our moral and religious conduct, for it is only through achievement of inner harmony and equilibrium that we can attain to a perfectly sound and godly life.

[542a] "Red combined with yellow," Saadia says, "stimulates the *choleric* humor and its properties; the soul then manifests energy and vigor. Yellow mixed with black makes the *phlegmatic* humor predominate, producing in the soul a state of dejection. A combination of black, red, yellow, and white sets into action the *sanguine* humor; the soul then manifests a will to power and dominion. Finally, a combination of green and yellow stirs up the *black* humor (melancholia), producing in the soul timidity and sadness. In like manner the increase or diminution of each of the ingredients in the mixture of colors brings about a corresponding change in psychic qualities."

[543] The text of this entire paragraph, particularly the portion dealing with music, offers great difficulties, which I have endeavored to explain in my forthcoming edition of the *Emūnōt;* comp. Guttmann, pp. 285-289; Ackermann, in Winter and Wünche's *Die jüdische Litteratur,* III, 500; below, *Bibliography,* p. 369.

In accordance with his usual method Saadia quotes numerous verses from the Bible, particularly from the Book of Ecclesiastes, and interprets them to make them bear out his ethical theories. Several of these verses serve him as a basis for the commendation of certain good habits and qualities which one should try to acquire, among them the effort to leave a good name to posterity, mindfulness of human frailty, zeal for the honor of God, patience and endurance, association with scholars and pious men, and consciousness of one's failings and shortcomings.

Saadia now closes his work with the following lines: "Nothing in this book will be of benefit, save to him who has purified [544] his heart and is intent on his moral elevation, as it is said (Job, 11, 13 ff): If thou set thy heart aright and stretch out thy hands toward Him, surely then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot." A few other verses are quoted to the same effect.

POLEMICAL WORKS

Polemics is a natural result of intellectual life and activity. Wherever there is a great display of mental energy and devotion to some cause on the part of an individual or a multitude of men imbued by the same spirit, it is bound to arouse the opposition and antagonism of others whose interests and opinions go in a different direction. This is, as everybody knows, the origin of all sects and schisms known to history. In the history of the Jewish people schismatic tendencies and actual defections from the general cause were not of infrequent occurrence. But at no time has there been so much dissension among the Jews and so much proneness to the formation of new sects as was the case in Oriental Jewry during the last two centuries before Saadia. The air was filled with religious unrest. Rationalists and mystics, demagogues and dreamers of all sorts succeeded one another and found adherents among the people, each one con-

[544] The Hebrew text is here corrupt, hence Guttmann's incorrect translation, "die Herzen zu reinigen." For כי אם לזכות הלב read כי אם עם זכות הלב, as in Arabic: מע אכלאץ אלקלוב.

tributing his share to the general confusion. None of the numerous sects, it is true, that arose in eastern Jewry during the period in question, survived for any length of time; but the repeated uprisings of these schismatics against the authority of traditional Judaism brought about a state of religious and intellectual commotion that continued its destructive effects long after the original causes had disappeared. Saadia himself, in his preface to the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* gives a forceful description of these conditions, part of which was quoted above.[545]

More than all other sects it was the sect of the Ḳaraites, founded by the energetic Anan b. David, in 760, that threatened to overthrow the authority of official rabbinic Judaism. To what extent the Geonim, the representatives of that Judaism, tried to counteract the spread and influence of the new sect, cannot be ascertained from the existing sources. In all probability they did nothing in this direction; either because they were too busy with the interpretation of the traditional law and the adjustment of the constant quarrels between them and the Exilarchs, as well as between the two rival academies which they represented, or—what is more likely—none of them possessed enough general education and literary skill to take up the fight against the very active and energetic propagators of the new doctrine. It required a man with the comprehensive learning, the sharp, tireless pen, and, above all, the fighting disposition of Saadia, to set himself against the manifold heresies that had invaded the minds of the Jewish people, and especially against the alarming spread of Ḳaraism, which threatened the very existence of traditional Judaism. Indeed, Saadia was the first and the last great scholar in eastern Jewry who, single-handed, waged a fierce literary war on all Jewish sectarians, particularly on the Ḳaraites. As early as his Egyptian period, when he was only in his twenty-third year, he struck at the very root of Ḳaraism, in a book against Anan, the founder of the sect.

[545] Conditions like those described by Saadia prevailed at that time also among the Muhammedans. An interesting parallel will be found in August Müller, *Der Islam,* I, 591.

It is easily possible that it was this book which aroused the great enmity and persecution on the part of the Egyptian Ḳaraites that made it necessary for him to leave his native country.[546] Saadia persisted in fighting Ḳaraism with literary weapons; and throughout his checkered life he continued to combat its apostles with unrelenting vigor, so that he became the most dreaded and most hated opponent of the sect down to our own times. We need not go so far as to assume with one recent investigator that everything Saadia has written in the numerous branches of Jewish literature had as its sole purpose the refutation of Ḳaraite doctrines.[547] There are several works by Saadia in which anti-Ḳaraite tendencies can be discovered only by a considerable stretch of the imagination.[548] It must be admitted, however, that polemic against heresies in general and Ḳaraism in particular, direct and indirect, is a very conspicuous feature in most of Saadia's writings. His commentaries on the Bible, the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,*[549] and many other works contain numerous controversial passages directed against Jewish schismatics, especially the Ḳaraites, although he does not always mention them by name. Our present discussion naturally excludes incidental controversies occurring in the works treated under the different branches to which they

[546] See above, p. 58 [and especially the *Postscript*].

[547] Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVII, 714 f., and recently in the Cohen *Festschrift,* pp. 265 f., and with still more emphasis in his latest article, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. VIII (1917-1918), p. 166. He is followed by Davidson, *Saadia's Polemic against Hiwi Al-Balkhi,* p. 36.

[548] Thus one will hardly discover any trace of opposition to Ḳaraism in Saadia's Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah,* nor is there reason to believe that his grammatical works (*'Agrōn,* etc.) and poetical compositions (as the שיר על האותיות) were intended against the Ḳaraites. For the תרי"ג מצות see Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xix: for the פרוש י"ג מדות see above, note 357; below, *Bibliography,* III, p. 342.

[549] Comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 257 f. As to the passages about the "so-called" Jews referred to by Poznański, *l. c.*, see above, note 524. For anti-Ḳaraite passages in the various writings of Saadia see Poznański, *ibidem,* and additions thereto in his *Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah,* pp. 97-99.

belong, and limits itself to the works devoted exclusively to polemics. It should be here observed that none of Saadia's polemical writings has been preserved. Of some a few fragments have been brought to light lately from the Genizah. Others are known only by quotations in Saadia's own works or in those of other authors, Ḳaraite as well as Rabbanite. Though all the controversial writings turned about points of the Law, later ages, when the Ḳaraite movement had lost its original significance, did not attach enough importance to these works to preserve them for posterity. They were allowed to fall into oblivion.[550] The following are the works thus far ascertained:

1. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ 'Anân* (כתאב אלרד עלי ענן), "Refutation of Anan."[551] Saadia's first polemical work, written in 915[551a] in Egypt. Nothing definite can be said as to the extent and content of this book. A Ḳaraite author, in quoting two passages from Saadia's lost commentaries on Genesis and Leviticus, refers to his "Refutation of Anan." From this it appears that he took Anan to task on questions of the calendar, which, according to the innovations of Anan, was to be fixed by observation instead of the rabbinic method of calculation. Besides questions of law and Biblical interpretation the book seems to have contained personal attacks against the founder of the sect, accusing him of low motives and selfish interests. It was in existence at the end of the twelfth century, but since then no reference to it has become known.

2. *Kitâb al-Tamyîz* (כתאב אלתמייז), "Book of Distinction." Probably Saadia's most important and most voluminous polemical work, written in 926-7, by which time, as I have demonstrated (pp. 63 f.), the author had been officially connected with the Suran academy. Unlike Saadia's other polemical writings, this work was not directed against any

[550] It is also very probable that all the polemical works of Saadia were systematically destroyed by the Ḳaraites, against whom they were directed; comp. Pinsker, *Likḳūtē*, I, 112; Hirschfeld, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. VIII (1917-1918), p. 177.

[551] For the literature see the *Bibliography*, p. 380.

[551a] See *Postscript*].

particular author, but against the Ḳaraites in general. Several extensive fragments have come to light from the Genizah. Besides, a Ḳaraite author of the tenth century has preserved considerable portions of the book in his Bible commentary. He reproduced them verbally in order to give the reader a clear notion of the work. Saadia himself quotes it together with his "Refutation of Anan" in the passage from his commentary on Genesis referred to above (p. 263), which was preserved by the same Ḳaraite author. He quotes it also in his "Refutation of Ibn Sâḳawaihi," to be discussed below. Moreover, several Rabbanite authors, as for instance, Moses and Abraham Ibn Ezra, refer to it under the hebraized title ספר ההכרה or ספר המבחן, and give some indications of its contents. These fragments and quotations show that nearly all points of divergence between Rabbanites and Ḳaraites were discussed in the work. The question of the calendar must have formed the greatest portion of the controversial matter.[552] Other questions are about the lighting of lights on Sabbath, the date of the Feast of Weeks, and the validity of the Oral Law. One of the fragments,[553] which forms the concluding chapter of the book, mentions a "Judah al-Iskandarânî," who, as has been assumed by recent scholars on sufficient grounds, is none other than Philo of Alexandria.[554] The closing lines of the work are: "I adjure by God those who study this book that they do it with a pure heart and strive after the truth, whether it be far or near, that they devote themselves to the Scripture and the Mishnah and to correct reasoning. Then they will arrive at [the truth] laid down in this book, and will thus re-

[552] This is apparent from the lengthy fragment in Schechter's *Saadyana,* no. ix; see also Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 252; *Karaite Literary Opponents,* p. 96.

[553] The one edited by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVI, 102-105; see the *Bibliography,* p. 381, letter *b.*

[554] See Poznański, *REJ.,* L, 10-31; *Karaite Literary Opponents,* p. 95; comp. *JQR.,* XVII, 65; B. Revel, *The Ḳaraite Halakah,* Philadelphia, 1913, pp. 86 f.

move from their hearts all doubts and errors—with the help of the Merciful."[555]

3. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ Ibn Sâḳawaihi* (כתאב אלרד עלי אבן סאקויה), "Refutation of Ibn Sâḳawaihi" (or Sâḳûya) written after the "Tamyiz." Various hypotheses have been advanced as to the identity of this Ḳaraite, but none of them is sufficiently assured. So far as can be gathered from the scant sources, Ibn Sâḳawaihi, provoked by Saadia's anti-Ḳaraite writings, wrote a book under the title "Kitâb al-Fadâiḥ" (Book of Shameful Things), in which he attacked the most essential parts of the rabbinic law. The title "Shameful Things" is meant as a derogative designation of the rabbinic law. Saadia's work was a rejoinder to that of the Ḳaraite. Several extensive fragments, covering about twelve pages in close print, have of late been discovered.[556] From these we learn not only the scope and content of Saadia's Refutation, but get sufficient information also about the nature of the work of Ibn Sâḳawaihi. The latter was divided into ten sections, each dealing with a special subject of rabbinic law in an antagonistic spirit, accusing the Rabbis of attributing to God bodily qualities, of misinterpreting the Bible, and of falsifying the calendar. Saadia takes up all the points of his opponent, to whom he often refers as "that ignoramus," or "that tyro," and refutes them one by one. The title "Shameful Things," he says, is appropriate to Ibn Sâḳawaihi's work, for it reveals the author's own shame and impudence (כזיה). It may be mentioned that in one of the fragments[557] the author makes allusion to the year when the Messiah may be expected. The computation is on lines different from those given in the eighth chapter of his *Kitâb al-'Amânât*.

[555] The ending is almost in the same words as that of the *'Amânât*, above, p. 260. Hirschfeld's translation of these lines (*JQR.*, XVI, 99) is altogether incorrect.

[556] See the *Bibliography*, pp. 382 ff.

[557] *JQR.*, XVI, 101; comp. Malter, in Neumark's *Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy*, Cincinnati, 1919, pp. 45-59.

4. *Kitâb al-Radd ʿalâ al-Mutaḥâmil* (כתאב אלרד עלי אלמתחאמל), "Refutation of an Overbearing Antagonist," whose name the author does not mention. It is not impossible that this is another rejoinder to the same Ḳaraite, Ibn Sâḳawaihi.[558] Of this polemical writing only one fragment has been discovered, and that, recently. It deals with the question of the proper appointment of the Festival of Passover. According to the rabbinic rules of the calendar, Passover could never fall on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday.[559] The Ḳaraites opposed this rule, and Saadia shows that their opposition is based on a wrong interpretation of the Scriptural verses relating to the question. Another point of controversy in this fragment is the day on which the showbread was set on the table in the Tabernacle. The Ḳaraite author argued against the plain meaning of the verse (Leviticus, 24.8), that it was on Friday, and this opinion Saadia refutes. From the points of controversy it is obvious that Saadia's antagonist was a Ḳaraite and not a rabbinical dissenter. That we have here again a part of the preceding work (No. 3) and not a separate treatise is quite improbable, because several sources refer to a separate work under the title "Refutation of the Overbearing Antagonist,"[560] and the fragment in question, too, addresses itself to such (הדא אלמתחאמל). As to the time when this controversy was written, nothing definite can be said. An author of the earlier part of the twelfth century[561] quotes a passage from a controversial work by Saadia against a heretic, probably a Ḳaraite, in which reference is made by Saadia to the "Book of Unity," and the same passage occurs in the second chapter of Saadia's *Kitâb al-ʾAmânât*, which bears this title. The controversial work in question might, accordingly, have to be assigned to a time subsequent

[558] Comp. Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVIII, 113 f.; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 109, n. 4.

[559] *JQR.*, X, 271.

[560] See the *Bibliography*, p. 384.

[561] Judah b. Barzillai, פס"י, pp. 20 ff., see the *Bibliography*, p. 383, letter *d*.

to the composition of the *Kitâb al-'Amânât* (933). It is doubtful, however, whether the passage quoted by the twelfth century author was taken from the work under consideration, or, what is more probable, from the Refutation directed against Ibn Sâḳawaihi. Moreover, as previously stated,[562] various chapters, if not all, of the *Kitâb al-'Amânât* were issued by Saadia as separate essays, prior to the appearance of the book as a whole. The controversial work, whichever of the two it might be, might therefore have reference to the single treatise and, like the latter, precede the *Kitâb al-'Amânât*. Finally, it should be borne in mind that aside from the polemics here enumerated Saadia wrote works of the same kind against other heretics and Ḳaraites, the titles of which have not been preserved. He also engaged in frequent oral disputations with various opponents of Rabbinism, and subsequently embodied their arguments as well as his counter-arguments into his numerous works, especially into those on the calendar and into some of his commentaries on the Bible, which are likewise lost.[563] A quotation in the works of later authors, such as the one referred to above, may therefore have been taken from one or the other of these lost works of Saadia. No definite inference as to its particular source should be made, unless supported by other evidence.

5. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ Ḥayawaihi* (*vulgo* Ḥiwi) *al-Balḫi* (כתאב אלרד עלי חיויה אלבלכי), "Refutation of Ḥiwi al-Balḫi," *i. e.* of Balkh, Persia. Written in Hebrew rhymed prose and referred to by Saadia himself in his *Kitâb al-'Amânât* and in his later work, the *Sēfer ha-Gālui*. Ḥiwi was not a Ḳaraite nor a follower of any particular sect, but a Jewish radical, who denied not only the validity of the Talmud, but also that of the Bible, either in its entirety or in part. Guided by certain heretical works of Muhammedan and Persian authors, severe critics of the Ḳorân, he applied their criti-

[562] See above, note 456.

[563] Thus Abraham Ibn Ezra's quotations of Saadia's refutation of the Ḳaraite Ben Zuṭa (on Exodus 21, 24, Leviticus, 23, 15) in all probability refer to a verbal dispute between the Gaon and the Ḳaraite; see below, *Bibliography*, section VII, p. 398, nos. 9, 10.

cism to the Bible, trying to prove that its statements often contradict one another, and that many of its teachings are against reason. He is reported to have written a book in which he raised two hundred objections to the Scriptures. Of these none has been preserved directly, but their nature and purpose are known from the recently published fragment of Saadia's "Refutations," which were partly embodied also into his *Kitâb al-'Amânât*, and from quotations of later authors, especially Abraham Ibn Ezra. From these we see that Ḥiwi believed in the eternity of the world, and denied free will and the possibility of miracles. He also attacked the Biblical passages that required the Israelites to build a tabernacle and to offer sacrifices, and he doubted the veracity of various Scriptural narratives, thus endeavoring to destroy the very foundation of the Jewish religion. He is said to have prepared an abridged Bible, from which he eliminated all objectionable portions, and to have introduced it as a text-book into Jewish schools. Owing to the religious unrest that prevailed among the eastern Jews of that time, as depicted also by Saadia, his ideas found many followers and his text-book seems to have had a wide circulation.[564]

We can imagine with what fervor and determination Saadia took up the fight against these dangerous heresies. Aside from the special work in refutation of them, a considerable portion of which has only been recovered recently,[565] he carried on actual war against the writings of Ḥiwi and, as we are told by the twelfth century chronicler Abraham Ibn Daud, he succeeded in having the expurgated Bible banished from the schools. In his *Sēfer ha-Gālui* (p. 177) Saadia points to his Refutation of Ḥiwi as a specially meritorious deed of his.

[564] For all the details here mentioned see the references in the *Bibliography*, pp. 384 ff.

[565] This very interesting portion, covering about one sixth of the whole work, was found and published by Dr. Israel Davidson. A full account of it is given in the *Bibliography*, p. 386.

6. *Sēfer ha-Gālui* (ספר הגלוי), "The Open Book," a title borrowed from Jeremiah, 32. 14. Saadia wrote this work during the years of his seclusion, after having been removed from the Gaonate by the Exilarch David b. Zakkai (931-934). It was composed in Hebrew in a highly rhetorical style, divided into verses, vocalized and accentuated after the manner of the Bible. The author's main intention was to justify his position in the struggle with the Exilarch and to defend himself against the attacks of his numerous adversaries. Incidentally it was to serve as a model of elegant Hebrew style. His enemies were not convinced by his expositions, and his imitation of the Bible, which they considered an act of arrogance and irreverence, only gave them additional ground for renewed opposition. Saadia then issued a second work (935-6), this time in Arabic, to which the original Hebrew text, perhaps in a revised and enlarged edition, may have been added. In this work, which he describes as *Al-Kitâb al-Târid* (אלכתאב אלטארד), "The Book that Refutes," he translated and commented upon the difficult Hebrew text, defended various points of grammar and style, which had been made the object of criticism by his opponents, and inserted some other material of a literary and controversial nature. The whole was preceded by a lengthy Arabic Introduction, in which the author summarized the contents of the book and related the causes that had led him to its composition.[566] Several extensive fragments[567] of both the Hebrew and Arabic texts, one of which covers nearly the whole Arabic Introduction, have been recovered, altogether about forty printed pages. In the Introduction[568] we receive most valuable information regarding the history and

[566] The proofs for all these statements, which in many points are at variance with the generally accepted view, will be found in the discussion given in connection with the *Bibliography* on this book.

[567] See the description in the *Bibliography*, pp. 387-394.

[568] The portion of the Introduction which is sketched in what follows was published by Malter in the *JQR., N. S.*, vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 487-499, where further details concerning the text and contents are given.

content of the work. In a few preliminary remarks, the beginning of which is missing, the author defends himself against the accusation of having assumed the rôle of a prophet by giving his book the appearance of a Biblical text. He avows that the division into verses and the addition of vowel-points and accents are merely means of facilitating the reading and understanding of a Hebrew book. He points to several post-Biblical authors before him, among them Sirach and the five sons of Mattathiah, the Hasmonean, who did the same without being censured. He then gives an outline of the whole work, from which we learn that it is divided into seven sections. The first contains a description of the value of learning and of the proper methods for its attainment, and the second deals with historical questions, *e. g.,* the duration of prophecy in Israel and the time of the redaction of the Mishnah and the Talmud. The reason for this historical investigation, he says, is that those who are called or call themselves Rabbis in his time, are quite ignorant in these matters. In the third section he describes the misfortune bound to befall a people that is ruled by a despot (as David b. Zakkai), and in the fourth he endeavors to prove from the history of Israel that God provides every generation with a sage or teacher who counteracts injustice and leads the people in the right path. With the self-confidence characteristic of Saadia, he points to his own Providential position as a leader in Israel and defender of the Law. The fifth chapter contains an exposition of the principles of the Torah and some computation as to the time of the Messianic Redemption. The sixth gives an account of the author's sufferings at the hands of his unjust enemies. The final section presents the ideas expressed in the Bible regarding the wicked who oppress the innocent and how they are punished. The purpose of this presentation, he says, is that the wicked of his own days may discover themselves in the picture and be induced to give up their evil conduct. Aside from the seven special subjects enumerated, the book as a whole, he continues, has three general purposes, the gist of which is that it is to serve the people as a model for

their Hebrew compositions;[569] for through the spread of Arabic and Aramaic[570] they have of late forgotten the proper usages of the Hebrew language. In this connection he refers to his earliest known work, the *'Agrōn,* and to the "Book on Language," both composed for a similar purpose.[571]

Aside from this general outline, the Introduction, as well as the fragments of the work itself, contains numerous remarks of exegetical and historical interest. If we may judge from the material at hand, the loss of this work is from many a point of view highly regrettable.[572]

[569] See the article quoted in the preceding note, pp. 492 f., nn. 20, 22; p. 494, n. 26.

[570] The text has נבטיה, *i. e.,* Nabatean, by which Aramaic is here meant; comp. Bacher, *JQR.,* XII, 705; Margoliouth, JQR, XIII, 157, n. 1.

[571] See above, p. 40.

[572] See above, pp. 119 f.; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 62, lines 9 f., from below.

Chapter VII

SAADIA'S INFLUENCE ON LATER GENERATIONS

After all that has been said in the preceding chapters about the life and activity of Saadia Gaon, there is no need to emphasize the importance of both his life and his work, not only for the Jewry of his time but also for that of all later generations. It is almost gratuitous to speak of the influence of one whom we know to have been the actual originator of a given development. Saadia did not merely influence the Judaism of the Middle Ages, but, to a very large extent at least, he created it. It is true that Saadia was neither the first nor the only Jewish scholar of the Geonic period who produced literary work either on strictly Jewish or on general lines. In the field of the Halakah he was preceded by several eminent authors, such as 'Aḥa of Shabbeḥa (750), the Geonim Yehudai (760), Amram (856-874),[573] Nahshon (874-882), who wrote on the calendar,[574] and Zemaḥ b. Palṭoi (872-890), who composed a lexicon to the Talmud.[575] Besides these and the earlier Masorites and synagogue poets, like Ḳalir and others, whose productions were of basic importance for the later development of the respective branches, there were also grammarians,

[573] Aḥa is the author of the "Sheëltōt" (*Quaestiones*), a considerable work containing Halakic disquisitions interspersed with Haggadic elements. The book appeared twice with commentaries. To Yehudai Gaon is attributed the "Halākōt Gedōlōt," while Amram is credited with the compilation of the first Order of Prayers; see above, p. 147, and the *Bibliography*, p. 335; for details regarding these works see Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 75 ff.

[574] The treatise is known as the *'Iggūl* (Cycle) of R. Nahshōn and was often printed; comp. Steinschneider, *Bibliotheca Mathematica*, 1894, p. 101, no. 14; Ginzberg, *Geonica*, I, 154-158.

[575] The work existed as late as the sixteenth century, but since then all trace of it has been lost; comp. Ginzberg, *l. c.*, pp. 159 f.

exegetes, and philosophers prior to and contemporaneous with Saadia,[576] whose works had some influence upon mediæval Jewish literature.[577] However, while many of Saadia's predecessors and contemporaries may have had a share in moulding the ideas of their time or of subsequent generations, the general development of our literature along all lines of knowledge and research actually began with Saadia. It was his comprehensive literary activity that welded numerous and diverse subjects of study and research into a rounded system of religion; that opened new perspectives to the thinking minds of the generations after him, and gave them a fresh and forceful impetus to continue to deepen the work he had begun.

It is further true that many great men of the first few centuries after Saadia, as the grammarian Jonah Ibn Ġanâḥ, the exegete Abraham Ibn Ezra, the Talmudist and philosopher Maimonides, and numerous others, likewise exercised

[576] This is obvious from very numerous passages of Saadia's writings, especially from passages in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* and in the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* in which he refers to or argues against predecessors; comp. *e. g.* Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* ed. Lambert, p. 81, last line; p. 82, l. 13, where another commentator of the same work (בעין אלמפסרין, see Steinschneider, *Bibliotheca Mathematica,* 1895, p. 24) is mentioned; *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* p. 207, last line (*Em.,* p. 103); 247, l. 3 (*Em.,* p. 126, l. 4; comp. *ZfhB.,* III, p. 176, n. 22, where the passages are unnecessarily referred to Ḳaraites); Introduction to his Commentary on Psalms (edited by Eppenstein in the Harkavy *Festschrift*), p. 149, bottom; comp. Rapoport, *Bikkūrē ha-'Ittim,* IX, p. 27, n. 6; J. Cohn, *MWJ.,* VIII, p. 73, n. 1; for Saadia's contemporaries see above, pp. 45, 66 f.

[577] Thus, the view that all the prophetic promises had reference to the time of the Second Temple, when they were fulfilled, a view against which Saadia, in one of the passages referred to above (*Kitâb al-'Amânât,* pp. 247 f.; *Emūnōt,* pp. 126 ff.; see above pp. 239 f.) argues with so much vehemence, is maintained also by Moses Ibn Giḳaṭillah of the eleventh century (comp. Poznański, *Moses Ibn Chiquitilla,* Leipzig, 1895, p. 27), who was strongly opposed by Naḥmanides (ספר הגאולה, London, 1909, pp. 16 ff.) and others. The matter is referred to also in an Arabic fragment of a Ḳaraite polemic against Saadia published by Hirschfeld, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. VIII (1917-1918); see *ib.,* p. 174.

tremendous influence in their respective fields of work. But they all built on the foundations laid by the Gaon; their works are full of direct and indirect quotations from his writings; and in some instances they could not have been conceived without Saadia's epoch-making utterances.

It would be an interesting task, and of real value for the history of the development of Jewish thought, to follow up the traces of Saadia's ideas in the works of mediæval authors and to show in detail how much they were, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, indebted to the works of the great Gaon.

It should be borne in mind that in measuring Saadia's influence it is not merely the direct citations found in the works of various authors that are to be taken as a criterion. Mediæval writers were not much concerned about stating the exact origin of the views they expressed. Any idea in the works of contemporaries or predecessors that appealed to them they appropriated readily, and gave it further publicity in their own works without the least consciousness of plagiarism.[578] If, on the other hand, a certain view did not meet with the approval of an author, he would argue against it or simply deny its validity, without mentioning the one responsible for it. The question was of the value of an idea; its author was immaterial. The result, especially in Jewish philosophy, was that theories were repeated by various authors as if new and original, and subsequent writers, when they happened to cite the source, would credit

[578] Even the Gaon Hai, so near the time of Saadia, used much of the eighth chapter of the *'Amânât* almost verbally (see below, note 614) without mentioning his source; and the same practice is observable also in the works of others. Authors of great scientific accuracy, such as Ibn Ǵanâḥ (see *MGWJ.*, 1902, p. 367, top) and Maimonides, are no exceptions. For the latter see Guttmann, in Isr. Lewy's *Festschrift,* pp. 308-326 (*Moses b. Maimon,* II, 216); *idem, Die Religionsphilosophie des Abraham Ibn Daud,* Göttingen, 1879, p. 9, and above, notes 399, 416, 446; see also above, p. 154, regarding Baḥya Ibn Baḳûdah. For some cases of conscious plagiarism see the references in Steinschneider's *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 16, n. 110; *Bibliotheca Mathematica,* 1895, p. 103, n. 14.

the one from whom they quoted, without troubling themselves much about the accuracy of the attribution.[578a]

The literary practice here described naturally found many exceptions. Particularly in the field of the Halakah, in accordance with a Talmudic dictum,[579] there existed a great anxiety to ascertain in each case the authority for a given statement. Unlike questions of philosophy, exegesis, etc., it was not a matter of general reasoning, in most instances of no immediate consequence for the religious life of the people. The problems of the Halakah concern matters of law and the decision is based essentially on authority and tradition. Here, naming of the sources is of special importance. The personal element in Halakic works, excepting, of course, their method and form which were often tacitly borrowed, becomes conspicuous, revealing the extent of an author's dependence upon his predecessors. In all other branches of Jewish literature anonymity and mixing of sources are pervasive factors. To determine the influence exerted directly or indirectly by the works of a given author upon those of later ages, it would be necessary to go over the entire field, comparing the related writings both in form and content, with a view of establishing the parallels. The immensity of such a task in the case of Saadia is obvious. If, in addition, we consider the mixture of languages in the literature of the Jewish Middle Ages, the fact that translations from one language into another contribute in no little measure

[578a] Thus, to quote a few instances only, Abraham Bédersi (13th c.), in his חותם תכנית, Amsterdam, 1865, p. 149, quotes in the name of Saadia what is found verbally in the translation by Ḥarizi of Maimonides's *Guide*, I, 15, while on the other hand Joseph Ibn Yaḥya (1494-1539), תורה אור, Bologna, 1538, ch. 8, cites Maimonides for what is originally Saadia's. Similarly, Saadia's discussion of the permutation of letters (see above, p. 186, with reference to Esther, 9. 3) is quoted twice in the name of Eleazar of Worms (12th c.) by Judah Moscato in his קול יהודה, a commentary on the *Kuzari* (Wilna 1905); see *ib.*, p. 25 *ad Kuzari*, I, 1, and p. 121, *ad* IV, 25.

[579] כל האומר דבר בשם אומרו מביא גאולה לעולם, "Whosoever reports an idea in the name of its originator brings redemption to the world" (*b.* Meg., 15*a*).

to the obliteration of identity and, finally, that the texts of most of Saadia's works are lost, we shall realize the difficulty, if not the hopelessness, of any present-day attempt at systematically tracing the Saadianic elements in the Judæo-Arabic and Hebrew mediæval literature.

Be that as it may, no such investigation, useful as it might be for our knowledge of Jewish literary history, can be undertaken here. It would require a special volume, of considerable proportions. For our purpose it will suffice to quote a few passages from the works of some of the most famous mediæval authors in the different fields of Jewish learning. These will demonstrate the high respect and almost unlimited recognition accorded to Saadia by the great minds of subsequent ages, and thus serve as an indication—but not a measure—of his undying influence. To begin with, Sherira Gaon (about 900-998), who may have known Saadia personally, in deciding a certain Talmudic question against a decision attributed to Saadia, declares it to be spurious, "because," he says, "Saadia was so great a scholar that no important law could have escaped him."[580] About the same time the philologist Menahem b. Sarūḳ, finding himself at variance with Saadia on certain grammatical points surrenders his own position in the following words: "As to R. Saadia, who has arranged these nouns under the letter *He*, I do not know what prompted him to do so, and what was his opinion thereon. But the accuracy of his interpretations and the comprehensiveness of his linguistic work testify to his understanding; it is therefore a matter of propriety and loyalty not to criticise the way he arranged his material."[581] Half a century later one of the most eminent scholars of the time, the Talmudist and mathematician Isaac b. Baruk Ibn al-Bâliya (1035-1094), excuses himself for contradicting Saadia on

[580] Responsa שערי צדק, 18*a*, no. 11; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 64, n. 6.

[581] מחברת מנחם, ed. Filipofski, London, 1854, p. 69; comp. Luzzatto, בית האוצר, I (Lemberg, 1881), 37.

a question of the calendar, as follows: "No one should reproach me, saying 'How dare you contradict a man great and distinguished far beyond your own greatness and distinction?' For, I answer, it is true that he [Saadia] was greater in every science than I am, but Moses our teacher was also a Gaon, and the greatest man in all Israel, and yet this did not prevent Eleazar the priest from doing what Moses had failed to do (Numbers, 31. 21). How much more should one be permitted to say that a view of Saadia does not appeal to him?" [582]

The renowned grammarian Jonah Ibn Ǵanâḥ, rebuking the Talmudists of his time for their neglect of Hebrew philological studies, points to Saadia as an example of a broad-minded Talmudist, in the words: "Not as such are known to us the great Talmudic masters of former times, for R. Saadia, of blessed memory, displayed great efforts in this direction attaining the highest end he was capable of. He strove toward the aim which with his comprehensiveness he had set himself in explaining the language, laying bare its roots and clearing up its branches in many of his compositions, both in those written especially for the purpose, as the work entitled 'Book of the Language,' and those which were not written especially for this purpose." [583] Judah Ibn Bal'am, a great grammarian and exegete of the eleventh century, would not decide a question on which Saadia and Hai Gaon disagreed, saying that it is too difficult to decide between two such great authorities, whom he calls "everlasting (or the world's) foundations" (Proverbs, 10. 25). To justify this attitude he points to another author, who, for the

[582] Quoted by Abraham b. Ḥiyya in his ספר העבור, edited by Filipofski, London, 1851, p. 59; comp. Steinschneider, *Bibliotheca Mathematica,* 1895, p. 100.

[583] Introduction to his *Kitâb al-Luma'* (edited by Joseph Derenbourg under the title *Le livre des parterres fleuris,* Paris, 1886), p. 3, ll. 18-23; Hebrew translation of Judah Ibn Tibbon under the title ספר הרקמה (edited by Goldberg and Kirchheim, Frankfurt a/M., 1856), p. v. For the "Book of the Language" mentioned in this passage, see above, p. 139.

same reason, would not pass an opinion in a matter on which Aristotle and Galen differed.[584] The poet Moses Ibn Ezra (about 1070-1140) likewise mentions Saadia and Hai together as "the two princes in the knowledge of the Law (Halakah) and the mightiest among the theologians."[585] The famous moralist Baḥya Ibn Baḳûdah closes the Introduction to his "Duties of the Heart" with the following words: "Understand of the Torah of thy God that to which I called thy attention. In order to accomplish this, avail thyself of the works of Rabbi Saadia, may God make shine his countenance and sanctify his spirit; for they illumine the intellect and sharpen the mind, they guide aright the negligent and stir up the indolent."[586] Abraham Ibn Ezra, though he often criticized Saadia's views,[587] styles him "the chief spokesman everywhere,"[588] and "the pillar of the Torah,"[589] and usually quotes him as "*the* Gaon," without adding his name. Abraham Ibn Ezra's pupil, the lexicographer Solomon Ibn Parḥon, takes occasion to characterize Saadia as "the chief preceptor and pioneer exegete, who interpreted Scripture in the proper way and placed it on a

[584] See Steinschneider in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* II, 308; *idem, Polemische und apologetische Literatur,* p. 273, n. 73, and *AL.,* p. 64, n. 6; comp. Dukes, *Beiträge,* II, pp. 186, 196. It should be stated, however, that the same Ibn Bal'am in opposing Saadia's translation of Is. 1, 8 (*REJ.,* XVII, 183) refers to him as "one who has no knowledge about the roots of the Hebrew language."

[585] Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 64, n. 6.

[586] Arabic text edited by Yahuda, Leyden, 1912, p. 33; comp. Munk, *Notice sur R. Saadia Gaon,* p. 6, n. 1; see also above, p. 154.

[587] For a general characterization of Abraham Ibn Ezra's relation to Saadia see Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Ezra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* Vienna, 1876, pp. 29ff; see also below, note 607.

[588] See above, pp. 52, 154.

[589] This title (עמוד התורה) he makes Saadia share with Onkelos, thus placing both on the same level; comp. Bacher, *ibidem,* p. 31, nn. 2, 3. The designation of Saadia as "the Gaon" without further specification is very common also in the works of other authors, but sometimes applies also to the Gaon Hai; comp. Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur,* p. 249, n. 13.

firm basis, so that all exegetes profited by his wisdom. He knew the holy language thoroughly, as also the language of the Arabs and other languages." [590]

Maimonides, who disagreed with Saadia on many a point, nevertheless says that "were it not for Saadia, the Torah would almost have disappeared from the midst of Israel; for it was he who made manifest what was obscure therein, made strong what had been weakened, and made it known far and wide by word of mouth and in writing." [591] Maimonides's celebrated pupil, Joseph Ibn 'Aknin, in mentioning his predecessors who had served him as models in the composition of his Commentary on Canticles, gives the first place to Saadia, "whose light we have used in order to illumine our way, and in whose path we have walked." [592] The Provençal Shem Ṭob Palquera (1225-1290), a man of great literary insight, says "R. Saadia, of blessed memory, commented upon the Torah and the books of the Prophets; his expositions are laudable, they contain true ideas of a scientific nature, but also views of the earlier Mutakallimûn, which

[590] מחברת הערוך, s. v. פרח. Ibn Parḥon's statement regarding Saadia's knowledge of "other languages" is borne out by the פרוש על סדר טהרות (see below, p. 342, no. 1) which shows Saadia's acquaintance with Greek and Persian and his intimate knowledge of various Oriental dialects; comp. J. N. Epstein, *Der gaonäische Kommentar zur Ordnung Tohoroth,* Berlin, 1915, pp. 32, 51-74.

[591] אגרת תימן (in קובץ תשובות הרמב"ם, part II, Leipzig, 1859), p. 5, col. *b;* comp. Rapoport, *Bikkūrē ha-Ittim,* XI, 83 f. For Abraham Ibn Daud see below, note 607.

[592] As the Commentary is in MS. only, I adduce here the passage from a copy made by Steinschneider, which is in my possession: וקד ראינא תפסיר אלמקדמין להדא אלכתאב מנהא תפסיר מעלם הדה אלטריקה וריסהא ועטימהא אלגאון אלמעטם רבנו סעדיה גאון ז"ל אלדי בנורה אסתצינא ועלי מנהגה משינא comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 64, n. 6; 231, no. 6 (line 4 from below read 105 for 100). Similar praise is bestowed upon Saadia by Judah Ḥasid (12th c.) quoted by Marx *JQR., N. S.,* II, 263. The famous mystic Abraham Abulafia (13th c.) likewise prides himself on the knowledge he derived from his study of Saadia's *Sefer ha-Emūnōt* (Jellinek, גנזי חכמת הקבלה, Hebrew part, p. 18; comp. below, note 622).

were refuted by later Mutakallimûn."[592a] Towards the end of the thirteenth century we hear the opinion of an author of high repute, the philosopher and poet Jedaiah ha-Penini of Beziers, who in his *Letter of Defence* of the study of philosophy, addressed to Solomon b. Adret, points to Saadia with the following words: "The most distinguished advocate of secular learning among all the Geonim and other ancient sages under Arabic rule, whose fame has reached us, is the great Gaon R. Saadia al-Fayyûmi, who has enlightened the eyes of the generations by his precious works; we possess his scientific Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* and his *Emūnōt,* in which he elucidates various doctrines and produces many arguments and interpretations of verses from the Torah and the Prophets, which he brings as near to the understanding as possible."[593]

Somewhat reserved is the praise of another Provençal, the Talmudist Menahem Meiri of Perpignan (died 1306). After having discussed the Geonim prior to Saadia, he says, ". . . . until the time came for R. Saadia, who was brought from Egypt to Babylonia, who composed numberless books on the oral and written Law, on grammar, and on some secular sciences, most of which are trustworthy. In his *Sēfer ha-'Emūnōt,* however, he wrote certain things which are not acceptable, and a pious man should not follow them."[594] Meiri, unfortunately, did not point out the objectionable passages he had in mind. Finally, we should mention one more author who expressed his admiration for the Gaon. It is

[592a] מבקש (ed. Hague), 24*a*. For Palquera see Malter, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. I (1910-1911), pp. 151-185, 451-501. For Palquera's designation of the Mutakallimûn as חכמי המחקר see Steinschneider, *Jewish Literature,* pp. 296, 310; comp. Delitzsch, עין חיים, pp. 311, f.

[593] כתב ההתנצלות, "Letter of Defence," printed in Solomon b. Adret's *Responsa,* I (Bologna, 1539), no. 418; also separately, under the title אגרת התנצלות, with notes by Samson Bloch, Lemberg, 1809; comp. Renan, *Les écrivains juifs français du XIVe siècle* (volume XXXI of the *Histoire littéraire de la France*), Paris, 1893, pp. 377-382.

[594] בית הבחירה, or Commentary on *Pirḳē Abōt,* edited by Stern, Vienna, 1854, Introduction, p. 16*b*; comp. Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 25.

the Italian Jewish bard Moses b. Isaac of Rieti (died 1457), the so-called "Dante Ebreo," who in his Hebrew imitation of the "Divina Comedia" assigns to Saadia a place of honor in the fancied paradise. As a merit of Saadia he points out "his books and polemics against dissenters, which brought light into darkness." [595]

A search through mediæval Jewish literature would no doubt reveal a large number of similar appreciations of Saadia Gaon and his writings on the part of later authors. There is no need, however, of multiplying such testimony; the few examples quoted show sufficiently the high place accorded to Saadia by the greatest thinkers of subsequent centuries.[596]

Among the numerous rabbinical authors of the Middle Ages only one is known, who saw in Saadia an innovator and promulgator of heterodox ideas and therefore spoke of him disparagingly. This one is the learned zealot Moses b. Ḥisdai תקו, *i. e.* of Tachau, Bohemia, or, as recently asserted,[597] of Tackau, near Erfurt, Germany (about 1170-1230). Moses Tachau, who was a recognized Talmudic authority and also a liturgist of some standing,[598] wrote a book under the name of כתב תמים, of which only a part has been preserved.[599] The work is directed both against the

[595] מקדש מעט, ed. Goldenthal, Vienna, 1851, p. 95*a*; comp. Dukes, *ibidem*, p. 4.

[596] See also Saadia Ibn Danan (about 1470), in the collection חמדה גנוזה, edited by Edelmann, Königsberg, 1856, p. 28 (mostly taken from Abraham Ibn Daud's סדר הקבלה; comp. Steinschneider, *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden*, § 81).

[597] Tycocinsky, in *MGWJ.*, 1910, pp. 70 ff. The author raises some doubts as to the identity of Moses b. Ḥisdai and Moses תקו. We deal here with the כתב תמים, whoever its author. Comp. J. N. Epstein, *REJ.* LXI, 60 ff.

[598] Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte der synagogalen Poesie*, pp. 315-317; Landshuth עמודי העבודה, p. 223. The *JE.*, *s. v.* "Moses Taku," has a cross reference to "Taku Moses," but there is no such article.

[599] Published by R. Kirchheim in the periodical אוצר נחמד, II (1860), 54-99, comp. Steinschneider, *HB.*, III, 62; *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, pp. 442.

philosophers and the mystics,[600] who interpret Haggadic passages of the Talmud relating to God, angels, resurrection, and the like as figures of speech or symbols. The author accepts even the most extravagant anthropomorphisms in their literal sense. He pours out his wrath on Saadia, whom he declares responsible for all the mischief done by the Jewish philosophers in falsifying the words of the Torah and the Rabbis. "I deplore," he says "the damage done by the *Sēfer ha-'Emūnōt.* It brought us the secular sciences and increased the evils, weaning away the multitude from sincere piety; casting doubts on everything, so that the people do not know where they stand; strengthening the hands of the scientists, who have a grudge against the teachings of our Rabbis, which are perfect, and setting in the place of the latter the empty talk of the former."[601] Referring to philosophic authors as a class, he says mockingly: "They all feed on the wisdom of the *Sēfer ha-'Emūnōt,*[602] leaving out things and adding others and writing books and discourses on many topics and on the reasons of prophecy. Indeed, prior to Saadia nobody dared give new interpretations, which deviate from the plain sense of the Scriptures and from the trustworthy and well-established words of our Rabbis.[603] It is the physicians and astronomers[604] that despise our learning and those that adhere to it." In another

[600] See below, note 615.

[601] *Ozar Nechmad,* II, 64, top; see also below, note 604.

[602] *Ibidem,* p. 68, top; comp. p. 65, l. 11.

[603] Further on (p. 75, l. 11) he accuses Saadia, on rather trivial grounds, of having tyrannized over the people and forced on them "a new Torah, unheard of since the days of Adam." Tachau feels particularly provoked by the Gaon's opposition to the Talmud, in proof of which he points out numerous passages in Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yezirah* and his *Emūnōt;* see pp. 74, where אמונות (l. 13) is a mistake for פם"י, and 93 f.; above, notes 462, 509*a*, 518.

[604] By "physicians and astronomers" he derogatorily designates all those who follow scientific methods in their studies, though they had nothing to do with these disciplines. Thus, in the passage referred to above (note 601) the Hebrew expression for "scientists" is הוברי שמים (Isaiah, 47. 13), which is commonly translated by *astrologers.*

connection [605] he quotes a "Commentary on Chronicles," [606] according to which Saadia was imprisoned for thirteen years. In the prison, Moses assumes, he must have come in contact with non-Jewish scholars with whom he had religious disputes, so that certain ideas became fixed in his mind and were maintained by him later on. "There he got also into the habit of grandiloquence, trying to force the multitude into his ways of thinking by high metaphors and "fourfold" repetitions of one and the same thought—yes, he might have written in five tracts (קונטרסין) what he wrote in fifteen." [607] To refute Saadia's theories the author quotes

[605] *Ozar Nechmad,* II, 69, ll. 8 ff.

[606] The Commentary here referred to was published by Kirchheim, Frankfurt a/M., 1874, and the passage quoted by Tachau is on p. 36. For further details on the Commentary, which is ascribed to a pupil of Saadia, see the *Bibliography,* p. 327. Regarding the story of Saadia's imprisonment for thirteen years, quoted by Tachau from that Commentary, see the references in L. Bardowicz, *Die Abfassungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen,* Berlin, 1913, p. 80, n. 29; comp. Steinschneider, *H. B.,* III, 62.

[607] It may be noted that charges of diffuseness and verbosity were brought against Saadia also by authors who were no antagonists of his. Thus Abraham Ibn Ezra, in his fondness for puns, plays on the words שערים and שעור, saying that the *Sēfer ha-Emūnōt* contains chapters of limitless length: והגאון רבנו סעדיה חבר ספר באמונות ויש בו שערים שאין שעור לדבריו (יסוד מורא, chapter 1, end); comp. also his censure of Saadia's longwinded methods in Bible exegesis at the beginning of his Introduction to his Commentary on Genesis. Still harsher is his criticism of the Gaon in his *Short Commentary on Exodus* (23. 20); see Reggio and Luzzatto in *Kerem Chemed,* IV, 104 ff., 136 f. The famous Hebrew satirist Immanuel of Rome (1270-1330), poking fun at a very tall man, says, "Mr. Soandso is as tall as Saadia's works are long." (מחברות, V, ed. Lemberg, 1870, p. 42), which hardly refers to the "large number" of the Gaon's works, as suggested by Steinschneider, *HB.,* XIII, p. 62, n. 7; comp. Dukes, *Beiträge,* II, 78. Berechiah ha-Naḳdan, the epitomizer of Saadia's *Emūnōt* (see the *Bibliography,* p. 361), in his מצרף (edited by Gollancz, London, 1902), p. 141, l. 6, likewise alludes to Saadia's diffuseness (אריכות מלין); see, however, Bacher (*Abraham Ibn Ezra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* Vienna, 1876, p. 19), who, with Dukes, repudiates these charges as unfounded.

numerous passages from his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,*[608] especially from the *Emūnōt,* each time adding some slighting comment. Tachau's method of criticism is best illustrated by the passage in which he attacks Saadia for having declared the statement of the Talmud, that besides this world God created eighteen thousand other worlds, to be the opinion of an individual teacher, which was not generally accepted.[609] "What an ignoramus," he exclaims, "Of the words of an *'Amōra* revealed by holy inspiration and derived from tradition we are to say that they were not agreed to by all Israel? But who has agreed to his worthless talk?"[610] In this strain he argues against many other points, and on one occasion even expresses his doubt as to the authenticity of the *Sēfer ha-'Emūnōt,*[611] because the copy which he happened to use did not bear Saadia's name. It is interesting to note that Judah b. Barzillai, who quotes the

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As to the exceptions taken to the *Emūnōt* in particular, they are due, I believe, in most part to the fact that the critics (Berechiah, Moses Tachau, probably also Abraham Ibn Ezra, in whose time the Arabic original was already very rare) read the work in the so-called Hebrew *Paraphrase,* which indeed has no parallel as regards turgidity and windy phraseology. The stricture of Meiri (above, note 594) is based on purely religious grounds. On the other hand Abraham Ibn Daud (1161), while recognizing the great merits of the work in general, declares that upon investigation he found it to be inadequate for his purposes: אמנם כאשר חקרנוהו לא מצאנוהו מספיק למה שצריך לנו (אמונה רמה, p. 2); comp. above, note 310. Ibn Daud, however, borrowed many essential points of his own system from the work of Saadia; comp. for details Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Abraham Ibn Daud,* Göttingen, 1879, p. 12. A much later author, Moses Ibn Ḥabib (about 1500), likewise attributed little value to the *Emūnōt;* see above, note 485. For the attitude of Dûnâsh Ibn Tamim to Saadia see above, note 75. For Ibn Bal'am see note 584.

[608] See the *Bibliography,* p. 358.

[609] The passage here referred to by Tachau is in Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* p. 5, bottom (Lambert, pp. 19 f.).

[610] *Ozar Nechmad,* II, 70, top; comp. also above, note 509*a*.

[611] *Ozar Nechmad,* II, 79; comp. p. 96, l. 6; Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 442.

same passage about the eighteen thousand worlds,[612] finds nothing wrong therein except that Saadia, relying on his memory, happened to misquote part of the Talmudic passage, a stricture without bearing on the question at issue. It should finally be remarked that while our author directs his arrows mainly against Saadia, "the first to speculate about the creations of God,"[613] he is no less opposed to all whom he considers followers and admirers of the Gaon. Even Hai Gaon[614] and men like the pious mystic Judah Hasid,[615] he finds, were under the influence of the *Sēfer ha-'Emūnōt;* but he naturally shows more animosity against Maimonides and especially against Abraham Ibn Ezra, who "was always accompanied by demons."[616] All this goes to show that even in the strictly orthodox circles of twelfth century Jewry, Saadia was known as the founder and originator of that critical, scientific epoch in Jewish literature which so disturbed the mentality of men like Moses Tachau.

Of special significance for a correct appreciation of the authority and importance attached by his contemporaries and successors to Saadia's works, is the fact that some of them

[612] פרוש ספר יצירה, ed. Halberstam, Berlin, 1885, p. 174.

[613] *Ozar Nechmad,* II, 77.

[614] *Ibidem,* p. 92; Tachau has in mind a Responsum of Hai which was published by Eliezer Ashkenazi in טעם זקנים, Frankfurt a/M. 1854, pp. 59 ff. The whole Responsum, with the exception of the "Questions" discussed below (*Bibliography,* pp. 365 f.), is indeed, as suggested by Tachau, taken without acknowledgment from Saadia's *Emūnōt;* see above, note 578; Bacher, in Steinschneider's *Festschrift,* p. 225.

[615] *Ibidem,* pp. 73, 95, and *passim;* comp. the *Bibliography,* p. 362, no. 1.

[616] *Ibidem,* p. 97; Ibn Ezra, Tachau reports, denied the existence of demons, but the latter proved to him that they do exist; for once Ibn Ezra was riding through a forest in England, when a pack of black dogs, which in reality were demons, suddenly appeared before him and their fierce eyes frightened him so that he died soon after; comp. Steinschneider, *HB.,* III, 62; *idem, Abraham Ibn Esra* (in *Supplement zur historisch-literarischen Abtheilung der Zeitschrift für Mathematik und Physik,* 1880), pp. 81 f.

became known in European countries, even among the Franco-German Jews, at a very early period. Numerous scholars of the eleventh century in France, Germany, and other non-Arabic countries, quote Saadia directly or indirectly, or show familiarity with his views. Among them may be instanced Rashi,[617] perhaps also his precursor Moses Darshan of Narbonne,[618] Nathan b. Jehiel of Rome, author of the *'Arūk,*[619] and Tobiah b. Eliezer of Castoria in Bulgaria, author of the Midrash "Leḳaḥ Ṭōb."[620] During the twelfth century Saadia's influence becomes general in all branches of Jewish literature, even in the works of authors who show a decided tendency toward asceticism and mysticism, as Judah Ḥasid[621] and his disciple Eleazar of Worms.[622] The leading

[617] For quotations of Saadia in the commentaries of Rashi see Reifmann's note, in קובץ מעשי ידי גאונים קדמונים, edited by Rosenberg, Berlin, 1856, p. 53; comp. Rapoport, בכורי העתים, 1828, p. 35, bottom; p. 36, n. 43; Dukes, *Beiträge,* II, p. 98, n. 9; Geiger, פרשנדתא, p. 7 (of Hebrew part); Harkavy, *Ha-Goren,* I, 89.

[618] See Epstein, ר' משה הדרשן מנרבונה, Vienna, 1891 (comp. Neubauer, *JQR.,* IV, 157), p. 46, where the interpretation of Eccl., 3. 21, appears to be based on that of Saadia, *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* pp. 192, 194 (*Emūnōt,* Leipzig, 1864, pp. 96, 98, top); comp. above, note 502.

[619] *'Aruk,* s. vv. המר and ענה; comp. *Oeuvres complètes de Saadia,* IX, 167, nos. 110, 111. From a remark in the latter passage (ור"ג פרש כרס"ג) it would seem that Rabbenu Gershom, too, (died in Mayence, 1040) was acquainted with some of the writings of Saadia.

[620] See Buber's Introduction to his edition of this Midrash (Wilna, 1884), pp. 11, 22, no. 29; comp. J. Nacht, *Tobia ben Elieser's Commentar zu Threni,* Berlin, 1895, pp. 6 f.; 30, n. 123.

[621] See the *Bibliography,* p. 362, no. 1; comp. also note 615.

[622] Comp. Steinschneider, *HB.,* III, 62; *idem, Abraham Ibn Esra* (as quoted above, note 616), p. 82, n. 84; Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 24, note; Geiger, *Parschandatha,* p. 50; above, note 491. Mystics of later ages were particularly attracted by Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah.* Eleazar's Commentary on that book is based on that of Saadia; comp. Jellinek, גנזי חכמת הקבלה, German part, p. 21; above, note 491. Even Ḳabbalists like Abraham Abulafia (13th c.) availed themselves of Saadia's philosophic teachings. Thus the latter's doctrine as to the sources of human understanding (see above, p. 195,) is tacitly adopted by Abulafia; comp. Jellinek, *ib.,* p. 29; above, note 592. By virtue of a false attribution to Saadia

Halakists of the time, like Eliezer b. Nathan of Mayence,[623] Jacob Tam of Ramerupt, grandson of Rashi, and some of the Tosafists,[624] refer to him as to one of the most authoritative Geonic sources. A thirteenth century author,[625] in the name of the aforementioned R. Jacob Tam, quotes the sentence, "R. Saadia, on the words of whose mouth we live and who handed the secret of the calendar down to us."

Through what channels the various Jewish authors of European countries outside of Spain became acquainted with the writings of Saadia, or with his teachings, cannot always be ascertained. Some of these authors, like Rashi, his contemporary Joseph Ḳara, Joseph Bekōr Shōr (12th century) and others, certainly knew no Arabic, and all the quotations of Saadia found in their writings, as they often state explicitly, are based on hearsay, or are taken from the Hebrew works of authors who understood the Arabic language and drew upon the original sources.[626] Others, like

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of another, mystic, commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (see the *Bibliography,* VIII, p. 404) some of the later admirers of the Ḳabbalah even acclaimed the Gaon as their own, crediting him with a device for the creation of a *homunculus* by means of certain manipulations with the alphabet. So Judah Moscato in his commentary to the *Kuzari* (קול יהודה), IV, § 25 (ed. Wilna, 1905, p. 94, bottom) and Joseph Solomon Delmedigo, מצרף לחכמה, Basle, 1629, *fols.* 9*b*, 20 *a*. The passage quoted by them as proof is found in the spurious Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (II, § 4) marching under Saadia's name; comp. below, note, 660.

[623] ראב"ן, no. 119; comp. Halberstam, in his edition of Judah b. Barzillai's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* Berlin, 1885, p. 309, l. 13; *JE.*, V, 118; S. Hurwitz, Introduction to מחזור ויטרי, p. 46; see above, note 418.

[624] See *e. g.* Müller, *Oeuvres* IX, 157, no. 73, also the Tōsafists mentioned below, notes 636, 639. For Aaron b. Meshullam of Lunel (1200) see the *Bibliography,* p. 368.

[625] Zedekiah b. Abraham 'Anaw, in his ritualistic work שבלי הלקט, ed. Buber, Wilna, 1886, no. 28; comp. Rapoport בכורי העתים, IX, 29, n. 23; Bornstein, מחלקת רם"ג, p. 25, n. 1.

[626] Geiger, *Parschandatha* (Hebrew), pp. 6-16. For Joseph Bekor Shor see *ibidem,* p. 50; Poznański, *Kommentar zu Ezechiel—von Eliezer aus Beaugency, Warsaw,* 1914, Introduction, p. lxvi, n. 1; p. 227, note on pp. lxiv; p. 228, note on p. lxxxviii.

Moses Darshan,[627] Nathan b. Jechiel,[628] and perhaps also Tobiah b. Eliezer,[629] knew the language of the Arabs and may have used or quoted Saadia directly. But whatever the case may have been as regards individual authors, we cannot explain the general deference paid to his authority except by assuming—and this is what I wish to bring out here—that some of Saadia's works were translated into Hebrew, either in part or in whole, long before the period of the Tibbonides, though most of those translations are lost. Thus Judah b. Barzillai, at the close of the eleventh century, made use in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* of two or three different Hebrew translations of Saadia's Arabic Commentary on the same book.[630] These translations differ from that of one Moses b. Joseph of Lucena, whose date is uncertain, but probably prior to 1148.[631] The famous fabulist Berechiah ha-Naḳdan,[632] whose date has likewise not been defi-

[627] See Rapoport's *Biography of Nathan b. Jechiel* (בכה"ע, X), note 47; Epstein, *Moses ha- Darschan,* Vienna, 1891, p. 8.

[628] Rapoport, *Biography,* note 14.

[629] Comp. מדרש לקח טוב, on Exodus, ed. Buber, p. 188, n. 4; Buber's Introduction, p. 36, line 3; Rapoport, *Biography of Hai Gaon* (בכה"ע, X), note 16, refers to a passage in Tobiah's Midrash, which is taken from an Arabic Responsum of Hai.

[630] See the *Bibliography,* p. 357.

[631] Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 444; his doubts as to the priorty of the translator Moses to the year 1148, when the Jewish community was expelled from the city, are not sufficiently founded. The style and strange terminology of the translation (MS. copy of the late Halberstam, now in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York) may rather be looked upon as a proof that the author lived prior to the period of translators inaugurated by the Tibbonides, in 1167.

[632] מצרף (ed. Gollancz, London, 1902), p. 118, l. 5 from below to p. 119, l. 21, which, with some deviations, corresponds to Saadia's text, ed. Lambert, p. 18, l. 16 to p. 20, l. 3. So far as I know this passage escaped the notice of scholars. For the question of the time and country of Berechiah and his knowledge of Arabic, which are still disputed, the origin of the Hebrew translation of this passage is of great importance, and its identification would eventually solve the problems. A comparison of Berechiah with Moses of Lucena shows convincingly that the authors are independent of each other; see the *Bibliography,* p. 358.

nitely established, some placing him in the twelfth, others in the thirteenth century,[633] and the Talmudist Moses Tachau (around 1200),[634] quote lengthy passages from Hebrew translations of that Commentary of Saadia's, each one of which differs from those mentioned before.

As in the case of the Commentary here discussed, so also in that of Saadia's great philosophic work, the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* we possess more than one Hebrew translation. Aside from the one prepared in 1186 by Judah Ibn Tibbon of Lunel, generally known under the title *'Emūnōt we-Dēōt,* there is also an anonymous Hebrew version written in a very peculiar style, which resembles closely that of the liturgical compositions of Eleazar Ḳalir and others. Much thought has been spent in the attempt to find out something definite about the author, the time and the country of this as yet unprinted version, or rather paraphrase, of Saadia's work.[635] A colophon in one of the MSS. shows the date 1095, but it is doubtful whether this is the date of the translator or of the copyist. At any rate we have here the work of an author, who lived in the eleventh century, if not earlier. In spite of the obscurity of its *payyeṭānic* phraseology, or perhaps because of it, precisely this version of the Arabic original and not that of Ibn Tibbon, became widely known among the Jews of France, Germany, and other European countries. This is evident from the fact that the aforementioned Berechiah ha-Naḳdan issued the whole work in an abridged form, and otherwise[636] made extensive use of its contents; that Moses Tachau, the Spaniard Jacob b. Reuben, the mystic Judah he-Ḥasid of Ratisbon, and the Tosafist Samson b. Abraham of Sens, all authors of the twelfth century, quote

[633] See Gollancz, *The Ethical Treatise of Berachya,* Introduction; Jacobs, *JE.,* II, 54.

[634] See the *Bibliography,* p. 358, and above, pp. 281 ff.

[635] For further details see the *Bibliography,* p. 360.

[636] Berechiah's work in the publication of Gollancz consists of two treatises, the one of which is the epitome of Saadia's *Emūnōt,* and the other, under the name of מצרף, is a compilation from the works of various authors, among them Saadia.

lengthy passages therefrom,[636a] and that throughout the Middle Ages entire chapters[637] of the work were current in Germany, France, and Italy as separate books.

That the Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah* and the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* both belonging under the category of religious philosophy, were not the only ones of Saadia's works that reached the Franco-German Jews of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Hebrew translation, hardly requires proof. Saadia's Halakic and liturgical writings, for instance, were known very early to Talmudic authors in Christian countries, as is evident from the numerous quotations collected from their works several years ago.[638] It may be admitted that some of these authors understood Arabic, and were thus in a position to use the originals, while others may have derived their knowledge of the contents from Jewish-Arabic scholars with whom they came in contact.[639] It is hazardous, however, to be satisfied with so narrow a basis for the comparatively wide diffusion of Saadia's Halakic views among scholars who were not acquainted with Arabic. Much more probable is it that some of Saadia's treatises on Talmudic literature as well as his Halakic disquisitions on questions of liturgy, which he had embodied in his Ritual-Order (Siddūr), were current in Hebrew translations. Their nonexistence at the present time proves nothing against this assumption. Nearly all of the Arabic originals are also lost, whereas quite a number of Saadia's Arabic *Responsa* exist only in Hebrew versions, of whose makers but one is

[636a] See for these authors the *Bibliography,* pp. 368, 362, no. 1, 365, respectively. According to Steinschneider (*HB.,* XVIII, 66) the Introduction of the Tosafist Samuel of Falaise to his ספר המצות (Vatican MS. no. 429) is that of Saadia to the *Emūnōt,* but he does not state which translation was used.

[637] See the *Bibliography,* pp. 362 ff.

[638] Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, 145-173; *Israelsohn, RÉJ.,* XXII, 295.

[639] Comp. for instance Samson b. Abraham of Sens in כתאב אלרסאיל (ed. Brill, Paris, 1871), p. 136. The אחד מהחברים to whom Samson refers is probably the same Abraham b. Nathan (see next note) mentioned there, p. 107, as the carrier of Samson's letter; comp. *Bibliography,* p. 365.

known by name.[640] All this merely corroborates what is partly known through other evidence, that in the centuries following close upon that of Saadia there was a lively exchange of ideas between the Jews living under Muhammedan rule and those living in Christian countries, and that the latter were anxiously endeavoring to acquaint themselves with the literary products of the former. For this purpose they sought scholars with a sufficient knowledge of Arabic to be able to interpret to them orally the contents of works written in that language or to prepare for them written translations. We may therefore take it for granted that Saadia's grammatical and exegetical works, or at least some of his numerous Biblical commentaries, soon became known among European Jews. This was brought about not only by Hebrew translations of whole works, or, what is more probable, of special parts and chapters in which certain scholars happened to be particularly interested, but also by occasional long excerpts embodied in the works of Hebrew authors, such as we find in Judah b. Barzillai's Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah* and in the Hebrew works of some Ḳaraite authors.[641]

That the works of Saadia in all branches of learning were eagerly studied by the Oriental, North African, and Spanish Jews soon after their appearance and in subsequent centuries, need not be proved in detail.[642] The Geonim Hai and Samuel b. Hophni, especially the latter, modelled their entire literary activity after that of Saadia; the scholars of Northern Africa, such as Jacob b. Nissim and his son Nissim, Hananel b. Ḥushiel, Dûnâsh Ibn Tamîm, and Isaac Alfâsi,

[640] Abraham b. Nathan of Lunel (1204) who translated one Responsum; comp. Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* pp. 909, 935, n. 217; Cassel, in Zunz's *Jubelschrift,* pp. 125, 131.

[641] See the *Bibliography,* pp. 320, 346, no. 4, 356 ff.

[642] The traveller Petahiah of Ratisbon (1180) relates that in passing through Babylonia he found the Jews studying the Bible and the six orders of the Mishnah with the commentaries of Saadia; comp. Graetz, *Geschichte,* V (4th ed.), 531; above, note 359, where further references are given.

undoubtedly were familiar with the writings of the Gaon, and made use of them, each one in his chosen field, whether we find direct quotations in their works or not.[643] As to Jewish-Spanish authors no names need be mentioned. There is hardly an author of an original work who did not draw upon the rich treasures in the writings of Saadia. Many advanced far beyond his theories in various fields of research, and, as frequently happened, even criticised them very severely; but despite opposition and criticism he was always recognized as the first expounder of Jewish thought, the master whose keys had opened the gates of scientific research.

It goes without saying that Saadia had also a large number of personal pupils, who spread his teachings by word of mouth and in writing. We have seen that even as a very young man, while still in Egypt, he had gathered around him a circle of friends and disciples, who recognized him as their authority, and remained faithful to him many years after his departure from his native country.[644] Later, when he was made the head of the Suran Academy, he became *ipso facto* the spiritual guide and teacher of all the scholars of the institution. Unfortunately, only a very few of Saadia's immediate disciples have become known by name. Among them is the famous grammarian and poet Dûnâsh b. Labraṭ, who is designated by the pupils of his opponent, Menahem b. Sarūḳ, as "the least important of the pupils of Saadia,"[645] no doubt an exaggeration born of the desire to belittle an antagonist. Other pupils of prominence mentioned by name are Jacob b. Samuel, whose family name is thought to have been Ibn Ephraim, under which name he is quoted by Abraham Ibn Ezra, and who is assumed

[643] For the relation of Nissim and Hananel to Saadia see Rapoport's *Biographies* in בכה"ע, XII, 27, n. 21; 28, n. 29; 81, n. 40, end; for Nissim in particular see Goldziher, *REJ.*, XLII, 179, 184 ff.; Schreiner, *Der Kalâm*, p. 12; comp. Graetz, *History* (English), III, 249. For Dûnâsh Ibn Tamîm see above, p. 48.

[644] See above, pp. 55 f.; below, p. 413, nos. 4-5; p. 418, no. 11.

[645] See Bacher, *JE.*, V, 11.

also to be identical with Jacob b. Ephraim, referred to by the Ḳaraite Jephet b. 'Alî (10th century) as the author of a commentary on the Palestinian Talmud;[646] Sahl b. Naṭîra, a member of the prominent Naṭîra family, which played so important a rôle in the reconciliation of Saadia and the Exilarch David b. Zakkai;[647] Abraham al-Ṣairafi,[648] author of a work of uncertain content referred to in a recent Genizah fragment; a certain R. Menahem who addressed some scientific questions to the Gaon. At the end of his letter of inquiry he eulogizes Saadia in a poem showing the acrostics סעדיה and מנחם and also applies to him the words addressed by Huram to Solomon: "Because the Lord loveth His people, He hath made thee king over them" (II Chr. 2, 10).[648a]

Finally, we should mention in this connection the tremendous influence of Saadia on the Ḳaraites and their literature. Their entire activity in the fields of philology, exegesis, and Jewish law received its impetus from the works of the Gaon and his followers. A very considerable portion, perhaps the larger part of the existing Ḳaraite literature, down to our present time, while antagonizing Rabbinism in general, actually aims at the refutation of the theories of Saadia, who, in the opinion of the Ḳaraites, was not alone their most determined adversary but also the strongest exponent of Rabbinic Judaism. For nearly a thousand years after the disappearance of the Gaon from the arena, the Ḳaraite authors unrelentingly attacked their dead opponent and

[646] This very plausible identification was suggested by Poznański in the Kaufmann *Gedenkbuch,* pp. 169 ff., where all the details are clearly set forth; comp. also Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon,* London, 1908, p. 27.

[647] See Harkavy's article on the Naṭira family in Berliner's *Festschrift,* pp. 34-43; comp. above, note 237.

[648] See the *Bibliography,* p. 402, nos. 15, 16. The Commentary on Chronicles edited by Kirchheim (above note 606; *Bibliography,* p. 327) is very probably the work of a pupil of Saadia, whose name, however, cannot be ascertained; comp. also Vogelstein-Rieger, *Gesch. der Juden in Rom,* I, 184.

[648a] See Harkavy, *Ha-Goren,* I, 91.

denounced his views. Notwithstanding this bitter enmity to Saadia they often appropriated his ideas or claimed that these had originated with some of their ancient teachers, with whom Saadia had studied or from whom he had plagiarized. This is not the place for a detailed discussion of this matter.[649] I wish merely to point out the fact that while Saadia has contributed, as no other Rabbanite in the history of Jewry, to the disintegration of the Ḳaraite sect as such, he is, on the other hand, chiefly responsible for the development of what is known as Ḳaraite literature.

In the foregoing sketch of Saadia's influence on later ages I have merely outlined the ground upon which a future, more detailed work may be undertaken. I have tried to show only the channels through which Saadia's scientific labors reached, within a comparatively short time, the entire Jewry of the Diaspora. Of what benefit they have been to the Jewish people and of what interest Saadia's life and literary bequests should be to us to-day, the reader, who has patiently gone through this volume, may decide for himself. Perhaps some of the traits in the Gaon's character may seem unadmirable and much of his reasoning may be found obsolete and unproductive. But a great man is entitled to minor faults of character; they make him the more human and the more interesting. If, furthermore, certain of his ideas and contentions impress us as being somewhat behind our age—this is what we should expect, since their author preceded us by a thousand years. They are, besides, greatly outweighed by a wealth of genuine observation and sound learning, which will retain its value throughout all ages. Taken all in all, Saadia must be considered a remarkable phenomenon in the history of the Jewish nation, a milestone on the long road of Israel's development as a "people of the Book." We may, indeed, with himself, recognize in him

[649] For the literature on the subject see Harkavy's article "Karaites" in the *JE.* and particularly Poznańsky, *The Anti-Karaite Writings of Saadiah Gaon, JQR.*, X, 238-276; *idem, The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon,* London, 1908 (reprint from *JQR.* XVIII-XX).

the man sent by Providence, whom—if with some not unpardonable egoism, yet in all sincerity—he describes in the following words: "God does not leave His nation at any period without a scholar whom He inspires and enlightens, so that this one in turn may so instruct and teach her, that thereby her condition shall be bettered." [650]

[650] ספר הגלוי, ed. Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 155, top; comp. Malter, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. III (1912-1913), p. 492.

Chapter VIII

LEGENDS ABOUT SAADIA

The Orient is *par excellence* the country of legends. Persons and events that in other parts of the world might have remained unnoticed because of their insignificance, have there been made the center of fanciful tales and traditions. It is therefore surprising that concerning the Geonim, whether of Sura or of Pumbedita, extremely little has come down to us that can properly be described as legend. I have undertaken no special enquiry as to Saadia, but I have no reason to think that he is an exception in this respect, or that there is much of a legendary character to be found about him in the works of mediæval authors. The few legends about the Gaon that have come to my notice may here be briefly recorded. The oldest anecdote, it seems, is the one reported by Judah Ḥasid of Ratisbon (12th century), which runs as follows:[651]

"A wealthy man set out on a journey to a foreign land, taking with him a slave and large sums of money. His wife he left at home in the state of pregnancy. It happened that the man died on the way and his slave, claiming to be his son, took possession of all his money and other property. In the meantime the widowed wife gave birth to a son. When the latter grew up he found out the whereabouts of the dishonest slave and betook himself thither to see whether he could not get back his inheritance. The slave had managed to marry into a very prominent family of the town, so that the cheated son was afraid to lodge his complaint publicly, lest the people do him harm. It so happened

[651] ספר חסידים, ed. Berlin, § 291. The object of Judah Ḥasid in relating this story was not exactly to glorify Saadia, but to emphasize the duty of a son to mourn for his father on the day of the anniversary of the latter's death.

that R. Saadia lived in that place, and the unhappy son stopped in his house. He was offered something to eat, but, like Eliezer of the Bible, he would not touch anything until he had revealed the secret of his mission. Saadia advised him to bring the matter before the king (or caliph), which he did. The king at once sent for Saadia to decide the case. Saadia ordered that each one of the two litigants should have some of his blood drawn into a vessel, whereupon he laid a bone from the body of the dead father into the blood taken from the slave, but the bone did not absorb any of the blood. He then placed the bone into the blood of the other man, and, lo, the bone eagerly absorbed the blood, because they both were one body. Saadia now decided that all the money in the possession of the former slave should revert to the real heir, who had come as a stranger to the town." [652]

Of somewhat later origin is the story found in a manuscript work of a fourteenth century author.[653] Considering the fact that the events told therein are obviously supposed to have taken place in a Christian country, we may even suspect that the Saadia who is the hero of the story, is not the Gaon, but his German namesake, Saadia b. Nahamāni, of the twelfth century.[654] However, the author repeatedly mentions "Saadia the Gaon," and we must take his word for it. Here is the story:

[652] For the origin and popularity of this blood-test story see Steinschneider, *HB.*, XIII, 133 f., who quotes numerous parallels from Jewish and general literature; comp. G. A. Kohut, *Blood-Test as Proof of Kinship in Jewish Folklore* (in *Journal of American Oriental Society,* XXIV, 133 ff); Davidson, ספר שעשועים, New York, 1914, p. lxii; Berliner, *Pletath Soferim,* Breslau, 1872, p. 50, n. 52.

[653] See Berliner, פלטת סופרים, Mayence, 1872, p. 30, no. 8; comp. *ibidem,* German part, p. 31, where it is suggested that the author is Nethanel Caspi, a Provençal scholar, who wrote a commentary on Judah ha-Levi's Kusari.

[654] See *JE.*, X, 578, 586.

"I heard that the priests (גלחים) of the city of לופייל מדייאה (?)[655] had placed the penalty of death upon any Jew venturing into the city. One day R. Saadia Gaon, of blessed memory, chanced into the forbidden city and was at once seized by the priests for execution. They could not agree, however, as to who should administer the first blow to the Gaon, each one of them claiming the privilege for himself. At last an old priest appeared on the scene, and, noticing the dissension among his colleagues, advised them to defer the matter until the arrival of the Bishop (הגמון), who would punish the captive for his offence. Saadia was put into prison, where he was given only bread and water, pending the coming of the Bishop. When the latter came and was told of the imprisoned Jew, he went to see him personally. Upon beholding the prisoner he was awe-struck, for the Gaon was of tall stature and fine appearance. The Bishop now assumed a friendlier attitude, asking the prisoner who he was. The latter answered, 'I am a Jew, and I beg you, Sir, not to shed innocent blood. If you wish to try my case, do it in a spirit of justice, and if I am found guilty, do with me as you please, for it is written (Deuteronomy, 1. 16): Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously.' Thereupon the Bishop asked Saadia whether he would be willing to engage in a disputation with the priests and reply to their questions. The Gaon answered in the affirmative, whereupon all the priests assembled in a certain place, with the Bishop presiding over the assembly. The Gaon was brought from the prison and thus addressed: 'Say, Jew, why did your ancestors kill Jesus, who was quite innocent? Was it not simply because he was God?'"

The author or reporter of the tale gives the reply of Saadia, the burden of which is that Jesus was not God, as God cannot be killed. He is evidently of the opinion that the argument was strong enough to convince the priests,

[655] Berliner, *l. c.*, p. 33, does not make any suggestion as to the identity of this city. Perhaps it is Laval in the Department of Mayenne, which was the seat of the Order of Cordeliers (Franciscans).

for he informs us at the end that the Gaon was "at once dismissed in peace."

In a curious note[656] by some anonymous writer Saadia is credited with the discovery of a recipe for the making of a certain kind of cakes, by the eating of which one is assured of never forgetting his learning. The prescription, written in Aramaic, is as follows:

Recipe: "To prevent forgetfulness; tested and reliable; was used by R. Saadia b. Joseph, of blessed memory, who found it in the cave of R. Eleazar Ḳalir, and it is used also by all the scholars of Israel and their disciples with much success—here it is: On the first day of the month of Sivan take flour of wheat, knead it while you are standing, make it into a cake, bake it, write on it, 'He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered, the Lord is gracious and merciful' (Psalms, 111. 4); then take an egg, boil it well, peel it, and write on it ..... (here follow five mysterious words, which are to be written on the egg). Eat that cake every day with the egg until the end of thirty days, and you will grasp every thing that you read [literally: *see*] without ever forgetting it again."

It is needless to say that Saadia had nothing to do with this "kitchen-wisdom." Nor was the story itself originally invented in honor of Saadia. The belief in the efficacy of cakes with certain mystical inscriptions as a means of strengthening the memory and for similar purposes was prevalent among the superstitious elements of various

[656] Published from Codex de Rossi, 327, by Ch. M. Horowitz, in בית נכות ההלכות, I, Frankfurt a/M., 1881, p. 58: לשכחה בדיק ומהימן ובו הוה עסיק רב סעדיה בר יוסף ז"ל והוה אשכחיה במערתא דר' אלעזר קליר ובו מתעסקין כל חכמי ישראל ותלמידיהם ומצליחים וזו היא. בריש ירחא דסיון סב קמחא דחטי ולש יתה כדאת קאים ועבד יתה קורסין ואפות יתה וכתב בה זכר עשה לנפלאותיו חנון ורחום ה' וסב ביעתא ובשיל לה שפיר וקליף יתח וכתב עלה אספיים כיסתם תרמת אוזן דכזוה. אכול ההיא קורסא כל יומא עם ביעא עד משלם ל' יום ותליף כל מה דאת חזי ולא תשכח.

peoples.[657] In Jewish history, the custom of eating cakes inscribed with Biblical verses in order to gain wisdom is known from times prior to Saadia; for the great liturgist Eleazar Ḳalir, in whose cave Saadia is here reported to have discovered the prescription, derives his name according to some scholars,[658] from such a cake (קלר, Greek κολλύρα = a small cake), which he was given to eat when he began to go to school, that he might become wise. Hence the connection established in the foregoing story between Saadia and Ḳalir.[659]

The preceding piece is well matched by a "Prescription" (תקון) for frightening away highwaymen which is attributed to Saadia in two Ḳabbalistic manuscript works. The direction is: Take a rod of almond, make a hole in it, write in a spirit of contrition, while fasting, ten (eleven?) mystical words on a piece of parchment made of the skin of a deer that was killed ritually, insert the parchment in the hole and swing the rod before the faces of the highwaymen, saying "stop!" They will stop at once and, terrified, will be unable to do you evil. Then smite the ground three times with the rod, whereupon they will go their way. As a further pre-

[657] See Goldziher's admirable study *Muhammedanischer Aberglaube über Gedächtnisskraft und Vergesslichkeit,* in Berliner's *Festschrift,* pp. 150 f.

[658] Nathan b. Jehiel, *'Aruk,* s. v. קלר, 3; comp. *JE.,* VII, 418.

[659] Goldziher, *l. c.* The story of Saadia's imprisonment for thirteen years as well as the report of Ḳabbalistic authors that he was buried at the foot of Mount Sinai are both of a legendary nature; see above, notes 278, 606. Abraham Ibn Daud's assertion, that Saadia was a descendant of the Tanna Ḥanina b. Dosa (see above, p. 31), though it may not be accepted as truth, cannot be classed among legends, since Saadia himself traced his pedigree still further back, to the Biblical Shelah, the third son of Judah; comp. above note 18. As to mystical works attributed to Saadia by later ages see the *Bibliography,* section VIII, pp. 403 ff.; comp. also Poznański, רב דוסא ברב סעדיה גאון (reprint from *Ha-Goren,* vol. VI), p. 26.

caution one should recite certain verses (Jer. 10, 10; Gen. 49, 18) and Psalm 121 before starting on his journey.[659a]

Finally there should be mentioned an anecdote reported by the famous bibliographer Ḥayyim Joseph David Azulai (died 1807), who found it in a manuscript which contained Saadia's "Poem on the Number of Letters." The anecdote runs as follows: "In a joking way the Gaon R. Saadia asked a tailor who came to his house, 'How many stitches did you make to-day'? to which the tailor retorted, 'May your Highness please tell me how many letters there are in the Torah.' The Gaon was very painfully impressed by this reply, for until this time it had never happened to him that anybody should ask him a question to which he knew no answer. For several days he worried about the matter, being unable to establish the exact number [of the letters]. He then used a mysterious name [of God] by which he

[659a] ללסטים תקון הר"ר סעדיה ז"ל. קח מקל לוז או של שקדים וכתוב אלו עשרה (!) השמות אדרמו"ן כסו"ס והגינ"א אברתי"א איטמו"ן נור"א נוראו"ת י"ה צבאו"ת ויה"י ציב"א על קלף צבי שחוט כשר בדקדוק אות לבדו בטחרה ובענוה ובצום ועשה חור במקל והכנים הכתב בתוכו ובעת שתראה לסטים או אדם שתפחד ממנו אז תכה במקל כנגדם ואמור עמדו ותבהלו והם יעמדו ויבהלו ולא יוכלו לדבר אליך רע וכן תכה ג"פ בארץ והם ילכו לדרכם ואתה תלך בשלום. אך בעת שתצא מן העיר אמור בשם י"י אלקי ישראל אלקים חיים ומלך עולם מקצפו תרעש הארץ ולא יכלו גוים זעמו ושיר המעלות לדוד אשא עיני אל ההרים כו' לישועתך קויתי י"י לי"ק קי"ל קל"י י"ק יק"ל.

The text, as here given, is taken from the "Fountain of Wisdom" (מעין החכמה) of Moses Botarel (MS. of the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York, *fol.* 73), who is probably himself the author of the תקון (see below, p. 404, no. 1). The same, with a few slight variants, is found in another MS. of the Seminary. In place of the last five abbreviations this MS. reads: ולהפך לפורקנך סברית י"י ובסוף אמור בשם סמוא"ל אוריא"ל ענא"ל אוריא"ל. The word ולהפך directs the reading of the words לישועתך קויתי י"י in reverse order. I am indebted to Prof. Marx for having called my attention to the two MSS.

conjured up an angel who to his great rejoicing revealed to him the number asked for." [660]

This story is obviously fabricated to explain the reason for the Gaon's composition of a poem on a subject which seemed to be very trivial.[661]

The few anecdotes here reproduced do not contain any historical element, nor do they add any particular feature to the picture of Saadia's personality as conceived on the basis of historical research. Their underlying idea, however, is fully in accord with the general results brought out by our investigation, that the Gaon was a wise and great man in Israel, whose wisdom was admired by Jew and Gentile and whose literary activity was a blessing to his nation.

[660] Azulai, שם הגדולים, ed. Benjacob, *s. v.* סעדיה. The same author, a great believer in the teachings of the Ḳabalah, here informs us on the authority of the famous Ḳabalist Ḥayyim Vital (died 1620. Damascus), that Saadia was endowed with the soul which belonged formerly to Hushai the Arkite (II Samuel, 15. 32) and subsequently to the Tanna Phinehas b. Jair (second century). In view of Saadia's bitter condemnation of the belief in the transmigration of souls (see above, note 511), the honor here intended for Saadia by the Ḳabalists is a great insult to his memory. For another story according to which Saadia taught the secret of producing life by means of the alphabet see above, note 622.

[661] See above, note 350.

PART III
BIBLIOGRAPHY

AN ACCOUNT, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL, OF MANUSCRIPT TEXTS, COMPLETE AND FRAGMENTARY, EDITIONS, TRANSLATIONS, AND CITATIONS OF SAADIA'S WRITINGS; TOGETHER WITH A REVIEW OF THE ENTIRE MODERN LITERATURE BEARING ON SAADIA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PREFATORY NOTE

The intention in this Bibliography is not to register all the discussions on Saadia's life, or on one or another phase thereof, which occur in general works on Jewish history, or in historical studies of particular aspects of Judaism. For instance, a monograph on the attitude of Judaism toward superstition may contain a chapter relating especially to Saadia. Such works will be recorded as far as they have come to my notice, but completeness cannot be aimed at. The same restriction applies also to the innumerable notes and miscellaneous articles on Saadia scattered through the vast periodical literature of different countries and languages during a period of nearly a whole century. Most of these articles have been recorded in Moïse Schwab's *Répertoire*. Moreover, nearly everything that is of any significance for the present work has been referred to in the footnotes. My chief concern here is to give, in orderly arrangement, a complete and systematic bibliography of all the writings of the Gaon himself, whether these writings have been preserved or not. All the publications of Saadianic texts, either entire books or fragments, whether in the original language used by Saadia or in translation, will be minutely described. Naturally, all that has been written by later scholars, ancient and modern, in connection with one or the other of these writings, will have to be noted in the appropriate places. The whole may thus be expected to form a fairly complete history of the Saadia literature and to give the student the necessary information on any point he may be interested in, respecting the life and literary activity of the Gaon.

A bibliography of the numerous MSS. of Saadia's writings extant in various libraries is not included. New dis-

coveries of fragments in the Genizah collections are constantly being made, so that investigation of this field cannot yet be considered as concluded. Occasionally, however, references to the Catalogues of MSS. in various European libraries will be given.

I. PHILOLOGY

1. *'Agrōn* (אגרון), a Hebrew rhyming dictionary. Two fragments, one Arabic and the other Hebrew, both forming parts of Saadia's Introductions to the work, were discovered in the Genizah in 1864 by the Ḳaraite Abraham Firkovich. The fragments were published completely for the first time by Harkavy, *ZfaW.*, II, 73-94, 175 (also separately, 1881; comp. Steinschneider, *H. B.*, XXI, 96; see also the Bibliography of Harkavy's writings by D. Maggid and S. Poznański, in Harkavy's *Festschrift* (also separately), nos. 81, 123, 238, 242, 246), and then in his *Zikron*, etc., V (1891), pp. 40-57, with copious notes and an Introduction in which everything pertaining, and many things not pertaining, to the history of the work and its fragments were collected; see Bacher's review of this publication in *RÉJ.*, XXIV, 307 ff. (comp. also Bacher and Porges, *RÉJ.*, XXV, 143-151). Independently of Harkavy, David Kohn (Kahana) published the Hebrew fragment from a copy of H. J. Gurland with lengthy notes and disquisitions under the peculiar title ספר לתולדות רס"ג, Cracow, 1891 (reprint from the אוצר הספרות, IV). At the end of the book a Hebrew translation of the Arabic fragment is given without the text (see *RÉJ.*, XXVI, 140); comp. below, under ספר הגלוי, p. 394. An article on the *'Agrōn* by Senior Sachs is found also in the Hebrew monthly החוקר, I (1891), 5-9, 36-40; comp. also *ibidem*, pp. 62-64 (Harkavy).

Aside from the two fragments of the Introductions here discussed some additional portions of the *'Agrōn* itself were found and partly edited by Harkavy, *Ha-Goren*, VI, 26-30. For further details see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 61, no. 22; see also Berliner, *Plētath Sōferim*, Breslau 1872, pp. 29 f.; above pp. 39 f.

2. *Kutub al-Luġah* (כתב אללגה), "Books on the (Hebrew) Language." Fragments of this work were found by Harkavy in the library of St. Petersburg, but only a few pages were published by him, together with a Hebrew translation, in *Ha-Goren,* VI (1906), 30-38. It will be remembered that portions of the work were incorporated by Saadia in his Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeṣirah* (Paris, 1891), pp. 45 f., 75-79. One of these (pp. 76, l. 2—78, l. 19) was published by Neubauer in the *Journal Asiatique,* 1862, pp. 261 f., and then republished, with a Hebrew translation, by Harkavy (*Zikron,* V, 61-65), who thought the passage to be part of the *'Agrōn* (see above, note 297). For various quotations in the works of later authors see Harkavy, *l. c.,* pp. 68 ff. A presentation of its content, so far as was possible on the basis of Saadia's Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeṣirah* and of citations found in works of later authors, was given by Bacher in *Die Anfänge der hebräischen Grammatik,* Leipzig, 1895, pp. 38-60; comp. also Bacher, *REJ.,* XXIV, 307 ff., and especially Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 60.

3. *Tafsir al-sab'ina lafẓah* (תפסיר אלסבעין לפטה), "Explanation of the Seventy Hapaxlegomena." This booklet was published four times within one year, first by Dukes in the *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes,* V (1844), 115-136, with numerous notes; then for a second time by the same writer with the omission of most of the notes and with some corrections, in Ewald and Dukes, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der ältesten Auslegung,* Stuttgart, 1844, II, pp. 110-115. These editions were followed by that of Benjacob in דברים עתיקים, part I, Leipzig, 1844, under the title: פתרון תשעים מלות בודדות לרב סעדיה גאון. In this edition the Arabic words which were used by Saadia in explanation of the Hebrew are translated into Hebrew, probably by Jellinek, though the editor does not say this clearly. The explanatory notes are also in Hebrew. Simultaneously it was published also with notes in Geiger's *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift,* V, 317-324. Finally a new edition was prepared by the indefatigable Buber (in Steinschneider's *AL.,* p. 339, l. 5. from below, erroneously: Bacher) in 1856 for the

periodical כרם חמר, but the latter having discontinued its appearance, the work did not see the light until over thirty years later in the periodical אוצר הספרות, I (1887), 33-52, under the title פי׳ר דבר. Buber's edition is based, so far as the text is concerned, on that of Benjacob, the Arabic phrases being given in the same Hebrew translation, but the learned editor added very copious notes and parallels from rabbinic literature. A Genizah fragment containing the larger portion of the book is described in Neubauer and Cowley's *Catalogue,* II, no. 2862, 27*c,* with the title שרח אלסבעין לפטה מן מפרדאת אלקראן, the Bible being here designated as Ḳorân; comp. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 85, n. 1; Poznański, *ZfhB.,* X, 148; Bacher, MGWJ., 1901, p. 565.

4. *Bible Translations and Commentaries:*

A. PENTATEUCH

According to Saadia's own statement at the end of his Introduction to the Pentateuch, he had originally prepared a translation of the Pentateuch, together with a very extensive commentary, in which, to judge from the description given by the author and from the fragments that have come to light recently, he did not confine himself to the exegesis of the Biblical text, but embodied excursuses on Hebrew grammar and syntax, lengthy philosophic disquisitions on the entire Pentateuchal law in its two aspects as *revealed* and *rational* (see above, p. 208), and numerous polemics against the Ḳaraites and other sectaries. This was the work to which earlier mediæval authors referred. Except for a few fragments of the commentary the book is lost, and what we possess to-day is a second translation without the commentary, which, as the author tells us, he prepared at the request of certain persons, who desired to have a plain, intelligible version of the Hebrew text without the insertion of all the elements mentioned before.

This translation was first printed from a MS. written in Hebrew characters, in the *Pentateuchus Hebraeo-Chaldaeo-Persico-Arabicus,* Constantinople, 1546. A century later (1645) it was published (from a Paris MS.) in the Paris polyglot with a Latin translation by Gabriel Sionita, and

then reprinted in the London polyglot (1657). Variants from another MS. (see Neubauer, *Catalogue,* I, nos. 28, 29) and from the Constantinople edition were given by Edward Pococke in the sixth volume of the London polyglot. For the Paris edition the Hebrew characters of the *editio princeps* were transliterated into Arabic, the cause of innumerable mistakes in the text. The Arabic text of the London polyglot was reprinted in the Arabic Bible edited by J. D. Carlyle, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1811; see Paul Kahle, *Die arabischen Bibelübersetzungen,* Leipzig, 1904, p. IV. During the years 1894-1901 there appeared in Jerusalem an edition of the Pentateuch under the title תאג (crown), in Hebrew כתר תורה, which, in the Orient, is the usual designation for all Bibles printed together with Targum and Masorah (see Bacher, *JQR.,* XIV, 584, n. 1; אבן ספיר, I, 12, overlooked by Bardowicz, *Die Abfassungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen,* Berlin, 1913, p. 39, n. 4, who misunderstands the meaning of ספר תגי, quoted by Norzi, for which see above, notes 52, 452). In this edition Saadia's Arabic translation, taken from MSS. in the possession of Yemenite Jews, was printed in addition to the Targum between the lines of the Hebrew text (in Hebrew characters). A modern critical edition with explanatory Hebrew notes was prepared for the occasion of Saadia's millennium by Joseph Derenbourg and published as the first volume of the projected edition of Saadia's complete works (*Œuvres complètes de R. Saadia,* Paris, 1893). Numerous corrections to Derenbourg's edition on the basis of a careful comparison with the texts of the Constantinople and London Polyglots were recently published by Josef Mieses, *MGWJ.,* 1919, pp. 269-290. Derenbourg's edition contains also Saadia's Arabic Introduction previously mentioned, with a Hebrew translation by Derenbourg, who gives also some specimens in French of Saadia's renderings of Pentateuchal passages, especially in the poetic portions. The Introduction was translated into German by W. Bacher, in Winter und Wünsche, *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II (1897), 248 ff., and later by W. Engelkemper, *Theologische Quartalschrift,* 1901, pp. 529 ff.; comp. Poznański, *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur,* Berlin, 1904, p. 43. Extracts from

Saadia's translation of the book of Genesis taken " from an edition (*sic*) of an authentic (*sic*) MS." in the Grand-Ducal Library at Karlsruhe, Germany, were published in German with some comments by J. Schwarzstein, under the title *Targum Arwi. Die arabische Interpretation des Pentateuchs von R. Saadia Hagaon,* Frankfurt a. M., 1886 (82 pages). A lithograph of eight pages of the Arabic text is given at the end of the book, but the author does not say a word about the origin and nature of the MS., except what I have translated above from the title-page; see also *MGWJ.,* 1901, pp. 185 f. (Fried's review of an Arabic translation of the Pentateuch).

Saadia's Arabic translation of Deuteronomy, 32-34, was reprinted from the Walton Polyglot (together with the other ancient versions of these two chapters) by L. Bodenheimer in two small volumes containing a comparative study on the different translations under the title האזינו, *Das Lied Mosis. Eine wissenschaftliche Vergleichung der auf diesen Pentateuch-Abschnitt in der Walton'schen Polyglotte enthaltenen Uebertragungen,* Crefeld, 1856, and וזאת הברכה, *Der Segen Mosis, etc.,* Crefeld 1860.

All the editions of Saadia's translations of the Pentateuch with the exception of Schwarzstein's extracts (?) and Bodenheimer's reprints were based on MSS. written in Hebrew characters. In the library of Florence (codex Palatinus Orient. 112, xxi) there is, however, a MS., dating from the year 1245 (643 of the Heǵirah), written in Arabic letters. From this MS. the first four chapters of Genesis (and Ex. 4, 20-26) were edited by Paul Kahle in his *Die arabischen Bibelübersetzungen,* Leipzig, 1904, pp. 13-26, but according to Bacher (*Rivista Israelitica,* II, 45-49; comp. *Theologische Literaturzeitung,* 1905, no. 8, and *JE., s. v. Saadia,* end of the article) the MS. does not contain the original work of Saadia, but a revision thereof, approaching more closely to the Hebrew text of the Bible; comp. Poznański, *ZfhB.,* IX, 13 f. Another, and still older, MS. of the translation of Genesis and Exodus (dated 637 of the Heǵirah= 1239, c. e.), written likewise in Arabic characters, is extant

in the library of Leyden. The text, which was published by Lagarde in *Materialien zur Geschichte und Kritik des Pentateuchs,* Leipzig, 1867, I, 1-108, differs considerably from the other recensions; comp. Poznański, *ZfhB.,* IX, 12; see also Kahle, *l. c.,* pp. viii, xii, 24. A third MS. in Arabic characters (of the 14th century), a specimen of which (Exodus, 35, 29 to 36, 13) is given by E. Tisserant, *Specimina codicum Orientalium,* p. 53, is found in the Vatican. For the MSS. of Saadia's other Bible works extant in various libraries see the references in Steinschneider's *AL.,* p. 56; see also Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* etc., I, 969, II, 495.

Of Saadia's Commentary on the Pentateuch the following fragments and extracts occurring in the works of later authors, partly in translation, are known:

a) A lengthy extract from Saadia's Introduction to the Commentary on the Pentateuch is preserved in a Hebrew translation in the פרוש ספר יצירה of Judah b. Barzillai (1135), edited by Halberstam, Berlin 1885, pp. 89-92. For a reference to the Introduction in another work see Steinschneider, *HB.,* VIII, 71.

b) A fragment of the Introduction, published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVIII (1906), 317-325. Hirschfeld assumes that the fragment formed part of Saadia's Commentary on Jeremiah, and this view is accepted also by Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 80, n. 1. There is not the least evidence for this assumption, except that a few verses from Jeremiah are quoted at the beginning. Saadia refers here to his discussion in preceding pages of the various qualities or dispositions of the soul, and then takes up the discussion of joy and sadness as "an appropriate theme for the Introduction to the book which he is about to explain" (Hirschfeld's translation of this passage seems to me incorrect). Now in the second recension of the seventh chapter of his *Kitâb al-'Amânât* (ed. Bacher, Steinschneider's *Festschrift,* p. 105, line 18; *Emūnōt,* ed. Slucki, p. 111, bottom) Saadia says explicitly that he had discussed the *sixteen* qualities or dispositions of the soul in his Commentary on Genesis. The fragment, it is true, refers to *eighteen,* but, in the first place,

not much reliance can be placed upon the reading of this badly mutilated text, and for י"ח we may read י"ו. A similar mistake is found in two other parallel passages. In the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* ed. Lambert, p. 68, line 3, Saadia refers to an "Explanation of the Construction of the Tabernacle" (ישרח מעשה משכן), no doubt in his Commentary on Exodus, 25 ff., where, he says, he showed eighteen (י"ח) parallelisms between the upper world, the Tabernacle, and the human body (comp. above, p. 186), but in the corresponding passage quoted by Steinschneider (*CB.,* 2207, bottom) from the work of another author, who cites directly from the Commentary on Exodus, we read in three places sixteen (י"ו) which, however, is incorrect as Abraham Ibn Ezra on Exodus, 25. 40, also quotes eighteen. Secondly, the number eighteen in our fragment may include the two additional dispositions of joy and sadness which he had previously mentioned (in the missing part) in connection with the other sixteen, and which he wanted to discuss here with more detail for the reason given before. We should not wonder at this procedure, as Saadia's habit of playing with numbers is well-known (see above, notes 473, 531).

That the number sixteen in the *Kitâb al-Amânât* is correct can be proved also by the recently discovered fragment of Saadia's commentary on Exodus, 21 (see below, under letter i), in which the author speaks of the five senses "and the other sixteen faculties of man" (וסאיר אלי"ו אלקוה אלתי פי אלאנסאן); see *JQR., N. S.,* vol. VI (1915-1916), pp. 367 (line 13), 377. It is therefore surprising that in the "Ethical Treatise of Berachya," in the passage corresponding to that of the *Amânât* (ed. Gollancz, p. 75), the number is *seventeen,* and the faculties are specified accordingly.

c) *Genesis,* 1, 2. Judah b. Barzillai, Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* p. 197, lines 4-30, quotes a passage from Saadia's Commentary on Genesis, as it seems, ch. 1, 2. Another short quotation, probably from the same chapter, is found *ib.,* p. 193, lines 11-17. The same passage occurs with some variations in Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* p. 9, lines 14-19.

d) *Genesis,* 3, 20, by Harkavy, הקדם, I (1907), 160 f. (only a portion of the discovered fragment).

e) *Genesis,* 18, 1, a lengthy extract in Judah b. Barzillai's Commentary, p. 131, l. 9 from the bottom. Here the author does not state explicitly that he is citing from the Commentary on Genesis, but it is obvious from the content. It is not certain how far the extract extends, but in all probability up to p. 135, l. 18, where another extract from a work of Saadia is introduced with the words וכתב נמי רבנו סעדיה "this, too, did R. Saadia write." The Midrashic style of the first extract at times makes Saadia's authorship doubtful, but it is known that Judah seldom quotes literally. He mostly paraphrases and often inserts phrases and entire sentences of his own (see below, pp. 356 f.). The same applies to the second extract just mentioned (overlooked by Halberstam in his index, p. xiii), which perhaps goes as far as p. 137, l. 6 from bottom. The work from which this is taken cannot be positively identified, but in all likelihood it is from the Commentary on the Pentateuch, if not from the Introduction thereto. The translation of בכאים by אגאין, Mishnaic אגסים = pears, or prunes (*ib.,* p. 136, l. 8, where the words והם בלע"ז פרונץ are certainly Judah's addition, פרונץ = *prunus*) agrees with that of Saadia to Psalms, 84, 7, ed. Galliner, Berlin 1903, pp. xx, 44, n. 12.

Among the quotations from the commentary on *Genesis* (28, 12) we should probably reckon also the passage cited by Abraham Bédersi (13th century) in his חותם תכנית Amsterdam, 1865, p. 149.

f) *Exodus,* 7, 16, Harkavy, הגרן, II (1900), 85 f.

g) *Exodus,* 12, 2, Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVI (1904), 298.

h) *Exodus,* parts of chapters 15, 28, 30, published by G. Margoliouth, *JQR.,* X (1898), 385-403, from a MS. in the British Museum containing an Arabic commentary on II Samuel by Isaac b. Samuel ha-Sefardi, whose date is not certain, Margoliouth placing him in the early part of the 12th century, while Steinschneider, *AL.,* 247, is inclined to place him as late as 1380.

i) *Exodus,* 21, 1-6, a fragment of four leaves (eight pages, 23-24 lines each) recently discovered and published by Hirschfeld with introduction and English translation, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. VI (1915-1916), pp. 359-372, 374-382. This fragment is in all probability part of the תפסיר ואלה המשפטים, mentioned in a book list found in the Genizah, for which see below, *Bibliography,* VII, p. 396, No. 2; comp. also above, p. 311, under letter *b.*

j) Two fragments from *Exodus,* sections תרומה and כי תשא, published with a Hebrew translation by Harkavy, *Semitic Studies in Memory of Dr. Alexander Kohut,* Berlin, 1897, pp. 244 f. The passages published by Harkavy are found also in the Bible commentary אמרי נעם (Exodus, 19, 9) by Jacob d'Illescas (14th century), and in the so-called *Tōsāfōt* הדר זקנים (same verse). In the latter work they are quoted from the unpublished ספר הגן of Aaron b. Jose ha-Kohen (13th century), for whom see Poznański, פרוש ע׳ יחזקאל ותרי עשר לר׳ אליעזר מבלגנצי, Warsaw 1913, pp. xcviii ff.

k) A long fragment, *Exodus,* chapters 25-40 (see Derenbourg, *MWJ.,* VII (1880), 133), of which only 30, 11-16, was published in German by Bacher, in Winter and Wünsche, *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II, 251-254.

l) A fragment of about four printed pages, *Exodus,* 35, 3, and part of 36, published by Hirschfeld with an English translation, *JQR.,* XVIII (1906), 606-613. For another passage from Exodus, 35, 3, see *Oeuvres,* IX, 170, no. 135.

m) *Leviticus,* 11, 11-28, with an English translation by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XIX (1907), 140-161. This is the largest fragment that has so far been published, covering 12 printed pages.

n) Fragment containing introduction to *Leviticus,* 16, and interpretation of verses 11-15, published with an English translation by Hirschfeld, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. VI (1915-1916), pp. 372-374, 382 f. The fragment consists of two leaves, but only three pages (with 23 lines to each), the first page having been left blank for the title, which is missing. Between leaves one and two the pages containing the

interpretation of verses 1-11 are missing. This fragment is in all probability part of the anonymous תפסיר אחרי מות, which seems to be identical with the תפסיר אלעריות; see below, *Bibliography,* III, p. 346; VII, p. 396, no. 3.

o) Fragment, *Leviticus,* section קדשים, referred to by Harkavy, הגרן, I (1899), 90; I do not know whether he has subsequently published it or not. A passage from the same section is quoted by Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2166 f. (comp. Poznański *JQR.,* X, 244, n. 1) from a work of Moses Ibn Ezra; comp. also Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* p. 20, n. 2; Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, No. 2862, 28; Poznański, *ZfhB.,* X, 148; *REJ.,* XIV, 119. According to a very probable suggestion of Steinschneider (*CB.,* 2205), the טעמי תקיעות, for which see below under Liturgy, p. 335, no. 1, also formed a part of the commentary on Leviticus, 23, 24.

p) *Leviticus,* 25, 36-46 (two pages) recently published with introductory remarks and translation by H. Hirschfeld, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. VII (1916-1917), pp. 45-46; 54-55.

q) *Deuteronomy,* 1, 41, and 2, 9-12 (two leaves by the same hand; after the first leaf there is a gap), published by Hirschfeld, *ib.,* pp. 50-54; 56-60; comp. the editor's general remarks, *ib.,* pp. 46-48, pointing out the similarity between the contents of this fragment and some passages of Saadia's *'Emūnōt* [but see *Postscript*]. For the עשר שירות, probably also a fragment of the Commentary, see below, *Bibliography,* p. 403.

Saadia quotes his commentary on the Pentateuch very frequently, *e. g.* in his Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah,* p. 12, l. 3 (comp. above, note 416); p. 44, l. 9 (comp. Schwarzstein, *Die arabische Interpretation des Pentateuchs von R. Saadia,* p. 1); p. 68, l. 3 (see above, p. 312, top); *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* p. 20, l. 4 from bottom; 37, l. 5; 84, l. 4; 106, l. 6, and in the second recension of chapter VII (Steinschneider's *Festschrift,* p. 105, l. 18; see above, p. 311, letter *b*); in the treatise on "Forbidden Marriages" (תפסיר אלעריות), Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVII (1905), 716, l. 4 of the Arabic text (see for details regarding this treatise below, p. 346, no. 4); Commentary on Proverbs, *ed.* Derenbourg,

pp. 52, 56, 119, 182 (see Derenbourg, Introduction) ; in the *Siddūr,* see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2205, where the passage is given in full.

For quotations of the Commentary in works of later authors, see Steinschneider, *HB.,* XX, 39, *AL.,* p. 66, nn. 27, 28; Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVIII (1906), 600 ff. (Jephet) ; Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah,* London, 1908, *passim;* Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* pp. 83, 216, last §. See also the two quotations from the שרח כביר (Long Commentary) in G. Margoliouth's *Catalogue,* III, 586, no. 1160.

It is very probable that the Commentary on the Pentateuch had the special title *Kitâb al-Azhâr* (כתאב אלאזהאר), "Book of Splendor," just as Saadia's commentaries on other books of the Bible (Isaiah, Proverbs, Job) had each a separate title. It is hard to believe that this title, mentioned by some authors and in Genizah fragments, designates Saadia's *'Azharōt,* as these would hardly be called *Kitâb* (book). A passage quoted by Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2207 (to which I have referred above, p. 312) reads: וקאל רבנו סעדיה ז"ל פי כתאב אלאזהאר פי שרח ויקחו לי תרומה. Steinschneider, *ib.,* 2208, changes (שרח) פי into (שרח) ופי, so as to separate the *Kitâb al-'Azhâr* from the Commentary. This change seems to me unwarranted, and the whole refers to one and the same work, the Commentary; see for the entire matter Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 66, n. 27; Bacher, *REJ.,* XXXIX, p. 206, no. 9; Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 22; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 81.

B. PROPHETS

Nothing has been preserved of Saadia's works on *The Earlier Prophets.* As early as 1886 Harkavy announced the discovery of portions of Saadia's commentaries on the Earlier Prophets (see *REJ.,* XIV, 119), but, so far as I know, they have not been published. Several references to these commentaries are found in Abraham Ibn Ezra's שפת יתר and David Kimḥi's *Commentaries,* for which see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2190. For an anonymous Arabic translation

see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 286, no. 91 ; Neubauer, *Catalogue,* I, no. 180.

Of Saadia's works on the *Later Prophets* the following have been preserved or are known to have existed:

Isaiah, translation and commentary, called *Kitâb al-Istiṣâlḥ* (כתאב אלאסתצלאח) "Book of (Moral) Improvement." The *translation* was first edited from a Bodleian MS. by H. E. G. Paulus: *Rabbi Saadiae Phiumensis versio Jesaiae arabica* etc., two volumes, Jena, 1790-91. The editor transliterated the Hebrew characters of the MS. into Arabic and, not knowing the language sufficiently, made numberless mistakes, which render the edition worthless; comp. Gesenius, *Jesaia,* I, 88 ff.; Munk *Notice sur Saadia,* pp. 29 f.; Derenbourg, *Oeuvres,* III, Introduction. A *Commentatio in Saadianam versionem Jesaiae arabicam* by D. Chr. Breithaupt appeared in Rostock, 1819. Solomon Munk published chapter 17 with a French translation and notes in his *Notice sur Saadia,* pp. 29-62. A critical edition of the whole, with the use of a Paris MS., was published with French notes by J. Derenbourg, *ZfaW.,* IX (1889) and X (also separately), and then again by the same writer and his son Hartwig with Hebrew notes and a complete French translation as the third volume of the *Oeuvres complètes de Saadia,* Paris, 1896.

Of the *Commentary* on Isaiah considerable portions have been preserved. Most of them, eighteen in number and ranging from chapters 14 to 63, were published with a Hebrew translation by Derenbourg in the volume just mentioned (pp. 105-147). Two additional fragments, parts of chapters 20 and 40, were published in Harkavy's *Festschrift,* non-Hebrew part, pp. 91-94 (by S. Fraenkel), and Kaufmann's *Gedenkbuch,* pp. 138-143 (by M. Lambert). A much mutilated fragment of the Introduction to the Commentary is found in Schechter's *Saadyana,* p. 55, which is the source for the title *Kitâb al-Istiṣlâḥ* mentioned before. In an ancient book-list from the Genizah, *Saadyana,* p. 79, a תפסיר ישעיה is registered, which probably refers to this Commentary; see Bacher, *RÉJ.,* XXXIX, p. 206, no. 8; Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 21, no. 3 [*JQR., N. S.,* XI, 425].

For an anonymous Arabic translation of Isaiah with short glosses see Neubauer, *Catalogue,* I, no. 181 (comp. *ibid.,* no. 180), and below, under *Minor Prophets.*

Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Quotations from Saadia's works on these prophets occur in several works of later authors, for which see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2192. The fragment published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVIII, 317 ff., as part of the Commentary on Jeremiah is more likely part of Saadia's Introduction to his Commentary on the Pentateuch, see above, under *Pentateuch,* letter *b.*

The *Minor Prophets.* The translation and Commentary to the Minor Prophets were in use as late as the 14th century (see Bacher, *Ein hebräisch-persisches Wörterbuch aus dem vierzehnten Jahrhundert,* Budapest, 1900, p. 45), but since then no trace of them has been found. References and quotations in the works of earlier mediæval authors are not infrequent. They were noted by Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2192, *AL.,* p. 67, n. 29, and Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 21, n. 1. [A recent fragment mentions מסאיל (?) מן תרי עשר; see *Postscript,* below, p. 427].

It should not be left unmentioned that there exists an anonymous Arabic translation (accompanied by short explanatory glosses) of all the Later Prophets (MS., Neubauer, *Catalogue,* I, no. 181, dated 1196), which, it is generally assumed, is based on that of Saadia, who is cited in it. *Hosea* and *Joel* were edited by R. Schröter, in Merx's *Archiv,* I (1867), 28 ff. *Joel* and *Amos* by Deszö Klein, Budapest, 1897; *Zephaniah, Haggai,* and *Zechariah* by A. Heisz, Berlin, 1902; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 286, no. 92; Poznański, *ZfhB.,* VII, 50.

C. HAGIOGRAPHA

Psalms: Psalms 1-5 and 11 (in full) and extracts from nearly all other Psalms (except the following eighteen: 43, 70, 97, 106, 108, 111, 117, 121, 124, 125, 128, 134, 136, 145-149) were first published with partial German translation and comment by Heinrich Ewald, in Ewald and Dukes, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der ältesten Auslegung und Spracherklärung des alten Testaments,* Stuttgart, 1844, I 9-74, with additions on pp. 154-160 (in Arabic characters).

The edition of the translation and Commentary of *groups* of consecutive Psalms was begun by S. H. Margulies, *Saadia Al-fajûmî's arabische Psalmenübersetzung,* Breslau, 1884, containing the first twenty Psalms (Arabic characters) with a German translation and notes. Margulies' work was continued by S. Lehmann (Ps. 21-41), Berlin, 1901 (see *ZfhB., VI,* 50); Th. Hofmann, *Die korachitischen Psalmen* (in *Programm des Gymnasiums zu Ehingen*), Stuttgart, 1891 (Pss. 42-49, 84, 85, 87, 88); S. Baron (Ps. 50-72), Berlin, 1900 (comp. *ZfhB.,* V, 40; *MGWJ.,* 1901, pp. 183 f.); S. Galliner (Ps. 73-89), Berlin, 1903 (comp. Bacher, *Theologische Literateraturzeitung,* 1904, pp. 677-79; Eppenstein, *ZfhB.,* VIII, 98); J. Z. Lauterbach (Ps. 107-124), Berlin, 1903 (Bacher, *Theologische Literaturzeitung,* 1904, no. 1; comp. *MGWJ.,* 1905, p. 503); B. Schreier (Ps. 125-150), Berlin, 1904—all these editions (except that of Hofmann), bearing the same title as the publication of Margulies, but giving the text in Hebrew characters.

Single disconnected Psalms were first published by Schnurrer in Eichhorn's *Allgemeine Bibliothek,* III (1790), 425 ff. (Psalms 16, 40, 110). The difficult Psalm 68 was published (in Arabic characters) by Dan. Haneberg, *Über die in einer Münchener Handschrift aufbehaltene arabische Psalmenübersetzung des Saadia Gaon* (in *Abhandlungen der philosophisch-philologischen Classe der königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften,* III, 354-410), München, 1840 (comp. *Literaturblatt des Orients,* II, 349 ff.); for Psalms 84, etc., which are also to be included here; see above, under Hofmann.

Saadia wrote a lengthy Arabic Introduction to his work on the Psalms, in which the scope, purpose, and form of the Psalter were discussed. This Introduction is followed by a commentary on the first four Psalms, which is considerably longer than the commentary on the same chapters which accompanies the translation. Upon this commentary follows another shorter Introduction, representing perhaps an earlier recension. Both Introduction and the commentary on Ps. 1-4 were published in a German translation, with

notes by J. Cohn, *MWJ.*, VIII (1881), 1-19, 61-91 (comp. Steinschneider, *HB.*, XIV, 118, XXI, 53), while the Arabic text was published by S. Eppenstein in Harkavy's *Festschrift,* pp. 135-160.

Saadia calls his work on the Psalms *Kitâb al-Tasbîḥ* (כתאב אלתסביח), "Book of Praise." This is not meant as a special title, as asserted by Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 81, but is merely the translation of the Hebrew ספר תהלים, or תהלות.

Proverbs, translation and commentary with the special title *Ḳitâb Ṭalab al-Ḥikmah* (כתאב טלב אלחכמה), "Book of the Search for Wisdom," first identified by Steinschneider in a Bodleian MS. (*HB.*, X (1870), 172, *JQR.*, XIII (1901), 446, n. 1). The work is preceded by an extended and very valuable Introduction, in which a general characterization of the Proverbs is given.

Extracts with a German introduction and notes were given by Jonas Bondi, *Das Spruchbuch nach Saadja,* Halle, 1888 (from chapter 1-9); by J. Derenburg, in Geiger's *jüdische Zeitschrift,* VI (1868), 309-315, and by R. Schröter, in Merx's *Archiv.*, I, 156, 160, II, 36 ff. The entire work, with a French and an abridged Hebrew translation, was edited by J. Derenbourg and M. Lambert as the sixth volume of Saadia's complete works (*Oeuvres,* etc., Paris, 1894); comp. Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* pp. 25 ff.; Poznański, *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur,* p. 45, top; Steinschneider, *AL.*, pp. 57 f. A full description of Saadia's method in his work on Proverbs and a detailed analysis of the content was given by Bernard Heller, *RÉJ.*, XXXVII, 72-85, 226-251.

Judah b. Barzillai, פרוש ספר יצירה, pp. 93, 155, quotes two passages from Saadia's Commentary on Proverbs, 8, 26-29, and 30, 4. The latter passage is also found in Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* ed. Lambert, pp. 15 f. The same passage is quoted by Eliezer b. Nathan of Mayence (12th century) in his Decisions (ראב"ן), no. 119; comp. Halberstam's Notes on the aforementioned Commentary of Judah b. Barzillai, p. 309, l. 13. Many passages are

quoted by Joseph Ibn Naḥmias in his Commentary on Proverbs, edited by M. L. Bamberger, Berlin, 1911; comp. *ib.* p. xv. Variants to the Arabic text from a fragment in the Munich library were published by Johannes Goettsberger, in *Biblische Zeitschrift,* II, 53-55.

Job, with Introduction, translation, and Commentary, called by Saadia *Kitâb al-Ta'dîl* (כתאב אלתעדיל), "Book of Theodicy." Extracts from a compilation in which Saadia's translation and Commentary, as well as those of two other authors are reproduced promiscuously (comp. Bacher, in Harkavy's *Festschrift,* pp. 221 ff.; *JQR.,* XX (1908), 31-49), were published by Ewald, *Beiträge,* etc., I, 75-115. See also Geiger, פרשנדחא, 7-16. J. Cohn published the whole book with the omission only of some parts of the Introduction and Commentary: *Das Buch Hiob übersetzt und erklärt vom Gaon Saadia,* Altona, 1889. A critical edition with a Hebrew translation, introduction, and notes by Bacher and a French introduction and translation by J. and H. Derenbourg appeared as volume V of the *Oeuvres complètes,* Paris, 1899; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 58. The first two chapters of Bacher's edition of Job were reproduced by Paul Kahle, *Die arabischen Bibelübersetzungen,* Leipzig, 1904, pp. 27-29.

Saadia mentions his commentary on Job in the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* p. 15, and in several other of his works; comp. Bacher's Introduction, p. x; see also Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 22, no. 11.

THE FIVE SCROLLS

a) *Canticles.* There is no doubt that Saadia made a translation of the Book of Canticles, and wrote a Commentary on it, though direct quotations from it are very scarce and not fully authenticated. Abraham Ibn Ezra cites in his שפת יתר (a defense of Saadia against Dûnâsh b. Librat), nos. 60, 67, Saadia's interpretations of two words in Canticles; but citations in this book, which is not quite reliable in other respects as well (see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2201, *opus* 30), do not always prove the existence of a work by Saadia on the Biblical book in question. They may refer to a passage occurring incidentally in one or the other of the lost

writings of the Gaon. In his Commentary on Canticles, 1. 2, Ibn Ezra refers more explicitly to the Commentary of Saadia on the same book, but here, too, another recension of Ibn Ezra's work omits the name of Saadia and reads " one of the Geonim " (אחד הגאונים). More reliable testimony, however, is found in the Introduction to an unpublished Arabic Commentary on Canticles by Joseph Ibn 'Aḳnin, the famous pupil of Maimonides, from which it is apparent that he had the Commentary of Saadia before him, taking it in some respect, as he says (see above, note 592), as a model for his own ; comp. Steinschneider, in Ersch and Gruber's *Encyclopædie,* II, vol. 31, p. 54, n. 75 ; *CB.,* 2188. Moreover, there are anonymous Arabic translations and commentaries on Canticles in several MSS. and editions, which, in form and content, bear so much similarity to the exegetical works of the Gaon that they have been ascribed to him even by careful investigators of recent times (comp. Steinschneider, *Encyclopædie, l. c.;* Rapoport, בכה"ע, IX, 37, n. 50). From one of these MSS. a translation and part of a commentary were published by A. Merx, *Die Saadjanische Übersetzung des Hohen Liedes in's Arabische,* Heidelberg, 1882, with a very learned Introduction, in which the authorship of Saadia is asserted. While later critics have, on various grounds, disproved Saadia's authorship of the translation and Commentary edited by Merx (comp. Jacob Loevy, *MWJ.,* X, 33-41, and Bacher, *ZfaW.,* III, 202-211 ; Poznański, *JQR.,* III, 343), as well as of another Commentary still in MSS. (see Salfeld, *MWJ.,* V, 125-131), it is generally admitted that these productions are in fact reworkings and amplifications by others of Saadia's original work; comp. Bacher, *Leben und Werke des Abulwalid Merwân Ibn Ganâḥ,* Leipzig, 1885, p. 93, n. 21.

The same seems to be true in the case of a Hebrew translation of an Arabic Commentary and of the so-called *Twelve Homilies* (י"ב דרושים) on Canticles ascribed to Saadia. Rapoport, בכה"ע, IX, 37, n. 50, considered the *Perush* genuine, Dukes, *Beiträge,* II, 104-109 (comp. Luzzatto, *HB.,* V, 146), on the other hand denies Saadia's authorship; see in

particular Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2187-89, *opp.* 18-20; Salfeld, *HB.*, IX, 137 ff., nos. 47, 71; Bacher, *ZfhB.*, ix, 50 ff.; Poznański, *MGWJ.*, 1907, pp. 718 ff. To my mind Saadia's original authorship has not yet been disproved, but the matter requires special treatment. The discussion of nine (actually eight) " musical tones " in the introd. to the Commentary has a parallel in *'Amânât*, p. 317 (see above, p. 259). *Homilies* (דראשאת) are often mentioned among works of Saadia. See *Saadyana*, p. 128; *REJ.*, XXXIX, 200, 203; below, p. 405 [and *Postscript*, below, p. 427].

There is still to be mentioned a work entitled: *Three Scrolls . . . . Canticles, Ruth, and Ecclesiastes . . . . with Targum Jonathan . . . ., Rashi, and the Arabic translation of Saadia . . .*, Jerusalem, 1911 (שלש מגלות . . . . שיר השירים רות וקהלת בלוית תרגום יונתן . . . . רש"י תפסיר ערבי של ר' סעדיה גאון). The translation, based on a Yemenite MS., is identical with that edited in Arabic characters by Merx, mentioned in a preceding paragraph. Regarding the MSS. of the anonymous translations and commentaries discussed above, see Steinschneider, *AL.*, 58, 287, nos. 100*a*, 100*b*.

b) *Ruth.* No quotation is known, Abraham Ibn Ezra, שפת יתר, no. 120, mentioning only the view of Saadia's critic, Dûnâsh. This silence does not prove anything, however, for we know positively that Saadia translated and interpreted others of the Five Scrolls and yet, as we shall see below, quotations from these works are extremely rare, or entirely lacking. Besides, here again we possess two anonymous translations (with portions of commentaries), one of which was subsequently recognized as that of the Karaite Jephet b. 'Ali (see N. Schorstein, *Der Kommentar des Karäers Jephet b. Ali zum Buche Rûth*, Berlin, 1903, Introduction; comp. Poznański, *ZfhB.*, VII, 134), while the other is considered to be either a modification of that of Saadia or the genuine work of the Gaon. Both translations were critically edited by M. Peritz, *Zwei alte arabische Übersetzungen des Buches Rûth*, Berlin, 1900 (reprint from *MGWJ.*, 1899, pp. 49 ff.; comp. S. Fränkel, *Deutsche Litteraturzeitung*, 1901, no. 20). I have not the least doubt that one of these translations,

namely that edited from a codex of the British Museum (defective at the beginning until *c.* 2, 13), represents the original work of Saadia, though I cannot here offer proofs for the statement. Even the Arabic Appendix to that translation, discussing the genealogy of David (Peritz, pp. 56-59), as, likewise, the Arabic portion communicated by Poznański (*ZfhB.*, IV, 168) from another MS., containing one of the translations with a mixed Hebrew and Arabic commentary on Ruth of a Midrashic character, impresses me as genuinely Saadianic, though the latter commentary as a whole must be the work of a later author; comp. the extract given by Poznański, *l. c.*, with *Amânât*, p. 147, lines 5 ff., where the same idea is expressed. It should be added that the translation edited by Peritz from the incomplete MS. of the British Museum is identical with the one published later (Jerusalem, 1911) from another MS. in the *Three Scrolls* mentioned above under Canticles. In this latter edition the text is complete. A literal Arabic translation of Ruth is found also in the book מגחת בכורים by Elia Benamosegh, Leghorn, 1856, but the translation differs entirely from those edited by Peritz and is certainly not the work of Saadia; see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 288, no. 101*c*.

c) *Lamentations.* That Saadia wrote a commentary on Lamentations is established beyond a doubt. It is referred to by R. Mubashshir, a contemporary critic of Saadia (see Derenbourg, *REJ.*, XX, 137; comp. S. Fuchs, *Studien über . . . . Ibn Baʿam*, Berlin, 1893, p. xxxii, n. 17; Poznański, *JQR.*, XIII, 340, n. 1, and above, note 82) and by David Ḳimḥi, *s. v.* כפף (see Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2189, *op.* 20, line 8 from below). It is also mentioned in an ancient book-list, Schechter, *Saadyana*, p. 79 (comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana*, p. 20, no. 4) [*JQR., N. S.*, XI, 425]. So far, however, no MS. containing either Saadia's translation or commentary has come to light.

d) *Ecclesiastes.* The only author who mentions Saadia's commentary on this book is the grammarian Ibn Ǵanâḥ; comp. Bacher, *Leben und Werke des Abulwalîd Merwân Ibn Ǵanâḥ*, Leipzig, 1885, p. 92, n. 15. No MS. is known;

comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, pp. 59, 137, n. 3. The Hebrew Commentary published by D. Fränkel as the translation of Saadia's original Arabic (קהלת עם פרוש רבנו סעדיה גאון, Husiatyn, 1903), has been shown by Bacher (*ZfhB.*, IX, 50 ff.) to be the work of another author; comp. Poznański, *MGWJ.*, 1907, pp. 718 ff., who proves it to be based entirely on a commentary of the Ḳaraite Salmon b. Jeroham.

e) *Esther.* The *translation* is printed in the Prayer-book according to the Ritual (סדר תפלות) of the Jews at Ṣan'a, Yemen, Vienna, 1896. For a full description see Poznański, *MGWJ.*, 1902, pp. 364-372. The *Commentary* on this book is mentioned by Saadia himself in his Commentary on Daniel (Bodleian MS., see Neubauer's *Catalogue*, 2486), as well as by his Ḳaraite opponent Salmon b. Jeroham, quoted by Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, p. 100, n. 1, and Joseph Ḳimḥi (see Poznański, *ibidem*, p. 364). It is probably also cited by Ibn Naḥmias (above, p. 321); for the objection of Poznański, *l. c.*, p. 365, that the passage quoted by the latter differs from Saadia's interpretation of the same passage in his *Amânât*, p. 112, has little weight, since it is well known that Saadia's interpretations of Biblical verses in the latter work often differ from those found in his commentaries on the Bible. In the book-lists mentioned before under *Lamentations* [*JQR.*, *N. S.*, XI, 425] a תפסיר מגלת אסתר ללפיומי is likewise mentioned, but it is doubtful whether *tafsir* refers to the translation or to the Commentary or to both, as the word is often used indiscriminately; comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana*, p. 21, no. 14; Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 59. For a fragment of the Commentary in a Genizah MS. see Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVII (1904), 66.

Daniel. The *translation* was edited by H. Spiegel, *Saadia al-Fajjûmi's arabische Danielversion*, Berlin, 1906. The *Commentary* is extant in MSS. only. For a detailed discussion of the latter see Poznański, *Ha-Goren*, II (1900), 92-103, and *MGWJ.*, XLIV (1900), 400-416, 508-529, where several passages of the Commentary are given and the literature on the subject is treated; comp. also Malter, in Neumark's *Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy*, Cincinnati, 1919, pp. 45-59. In this Commentary, Saadia quotes twice

his *Kitâb al-Amânât* (Poznański, *Ha-Goren,* II, 101, and *MGWJ.,* XLIV, 511) ; consequently the work on Daniel was composed or revised after 933; see also above, under *Esther.* The Hebrew Commentary printed in the מקראות גדולות under the name of Saadia has been proved long ago (Rapoport, *Bikkure ha-'Ittim,* IX (1828), 34 f.) to belong to a later author; see Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters,* p. 445, § 260; comp. also Poznański's article in *Ha-Goren, l. c.;* below, p. 404. A. F. Gallé, *Daniel avec commentaires de R. Saadia . . . . et variantes de versions arabe et syriaque,* Paris, 1900, is pseudo-Saadia.

Ezra and *Nehemiah* (usually counted by the ancients as one book). Three mediæval writers quote passages from a commentary on these books in the name of "R. Saadia"; see the references in Steinschneider's *CB.,* 2195, *s. v.* Esra. These passages, however, have since been found in a Hebrew commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah which in most MSS. is anonymous, while one (Munich) ascribes it to Benjamin b. Judah, an Italian exegete of the first half of the fourteenth century, and another one (Milan) to Saadia Gaon. The commentary was published by H. J. Mathews, *Commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah by Rabbi Saadiah,* Oxford, 1882. The editor in his learned introduction proves with sufficient reason that the author is not Saadia Gaon, but, if his name was Saadia at all, he was probably the writer who is known as pseudo-Saadia, author of the Commentary on Daniel (see above, under *Daniel*). The three quotations from a commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah by R. Saadia are accordingly to be considered as referring to the pseudo-Saadia edited by Mathews, and there is no direct proof that Saadia Gaon ever wrote a commentary on these books. On general grounds, however, it is considered certain that he translated and commented upon them, as well as upon the rest of the Bible. Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Sefat Yeter,* no. 138, quotes Nehemiah, 5, 4 (Steinschneider, *CB., 2202,* line 34, erroneously: IV, 22) without the name of Saadia, but see above, under *Canticles* regarding quotations in this book; comp. also Joel Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. 160, no. 79; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 79, n. 4, who on p. 216 contradicts his own view

as to the quotation in שבלי הלקט. For completeness' sake it may be added that the Commentary edited by Mathews was published a second time (the editor says on the title-page: *zum ersten Male*), Berlin, 1895 (reprint from קבוץ על יד, VII; see also *MWJ.*, XVI, 207 ff.), by Heinrich Berger, who ascribes it to Benjamin b. Judah, though his authorship was fully disproved by Mathews, pp. ii ff.; comp. Halberstam, קבוץ על יד VII, 42; Poznański, *Ha-Goren,* II, 98; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 59, bottom.

From a curious misunderstanding of a passage in Saadia's *'Emūnōt* (ed. Slucki, p. 129; Arabic original, p. 253) both Grünhut (in the מאסף edited by L. Rabinowitz, St. Petersburg, 1902, I, 137) and Poznański (*Ha-Goren,* II, 101) derived the proof that Saadia had quoted his own Commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah. As a matter of fact in the passage under consideration Saadia does not refer to his Commentary on these books, but to his explanation of the particular verse in question (Ezra, 4, 24), which he had given in another place of the *'Emūnōt* itself (p. 122; Arabic, p. 238).

Chronicles. No definite reference to a work of Saadia's on this book is known. The only evidence that such ever existed is afforded by an anonymous Hebrew Commentary edited by R. Kirchheim (פרוש על דברי הימים מיוחס לאחד מתלמידי סעדיה הגאון, Frankfurt a/M., 1874), which is supposed to have been written in the tenth century by a pupil of Saadia and to be in part Saadia's work; see Kirchheim's Introduction, p. vi; L. Donath, *MWJ.,* I, nos. 21-24; S. Landau, *Ansichten des Talmuds,* etc., Halle, 1888, pp. 65 ff. Saadia is mentioned by name several times (pp. 19, 27, 36, *bis*); comp. Brüll, *Jahrbücher,* II, 191 ff.; Egers, *HB.,* XIV, 124 f.; Steinschneider, *HB.,* XIV, 130; XVI, 90. For a supposed quotation of the Commentary of Saadia in a Geonic Responsum see Ginzberg, *Geonica,* II, 16; Poznański, *JQR., N. S.,* vol. II (1912-1913), p. 424. For details pertaining to this Commentary and its relations to Saadia see the recent work of L. Bardowicz, *Die Abfassungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen,* Berlin, 1913; comp. *ibidem,* p. 43, n. 3; above, note 606; Aptowitzer, in A. Schwarz's *Festschrift,* Berlin, 1917, pp. 121 ff.

For a general characterization of Saadia's Bible exegesis see in particular the following authors (cited in chronological order): Gesenius, *Jesaia,* Leipzig, 1821, I, 88-96; Munk, *Notice sur R. Saadia Gaon* (1838), pp. 44-58; comp. also *Additions* in his *Commentaire sur le livre de Habakkouk,* 1843, pp. 104 ff. (comp. *Literaturblatt des Orients,* II, 349 ff.); Ewald und Dukes, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der ältesten Auslegung . . . . des Alten Testaments* (1844), I, 5-115; II, 5-100; Geiger, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift,* V (1844), 281-316 (comp. also his *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* IV, 201 ff.; *Nachgelassene Schriften,* IV, 116 f.); L. Bodenheimer, *Das Paraphrastische der arabischen übersetzung des Saadia,* in *Frankel's Monatsschrift,* IV (1854), 23-33; Graetz, *Geschichte* (4), V, 285 f.; Weiss, דר''ו (ed. Wilna, 1904), pp. 127 f.; *idem* in האסיף, 1885, pp. 275-293; M. Wolff, *Zur Characteristik der Bibelexegese Saadia Alfajûmi's, ZfaW.,* 1884, 1885; Bacher, *Die Anfänge der hebräischen Grammatik* (1895), chiefly with reference to grammar; *idem,* in Winter und Wünsche, *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II (1897), 138 f., 243 ff.; *JE.,* X, 579-586; comp. also his *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* Wien, 1876, pp. 23-37; 61-63; W. Engelkemper, *De Saadiae Gaonis vita,* etc., Münster, 1897; B. Heller, *La version arabe et le commentaire des Proverbes du Gaon Saadia, REJ.,* XXXVII (1898), 72-85; 226-251; A. Schmiedl, *Randbemerkungen zu Saadia's Pentateuchübersetzung, MGWJ.,* 1901, pp. 124 ff. (comp. *ibidem,* pp. 565 f., the notes of Bacher and J. Cohn), 1902, pp. 84-88; 358-361; Steinschneider, *AL.* (1902), p. 55; Eppenstein, *Beiträge* (1913), pp. 85-89.

Aside from these works and essays, the introductions and notes to the editions of Saadia's Biblical works or fragments thereof, whether genuine or merely attributed to him, contain, likewise, general characterizations of his exegetical methods, especially the Introductions of Haneberg (Psalms), Merx (Canticles), Cohn (Psalms, Job), Bondi (Proverbs), and Hartwig Derenbourg (to Bacher's edition of Job); comp. also Morris Jastrow, Jr., *Jewish Grammarians of the Middle Ages, Hebraica,* III (1886-1887), pp. 171-174.

For Saadia's Bible exegesis in his philosophic works see the *Bibliography* under *Philosophy*. For miscellaneous subjects bearing on Saadia's Bible translation see S. Fraenkel, *Miscellen zu Saadias Bibelübersetzung, MGWJ.*, 1899, p. 471; J. Schwarzstein, *Zoologie der Bibel nach der arabischen Interpretation des Rabbi Saadia Hagaon,* in the *Actes* of the eleventh Congress of Orientalists, Paris, 1897, *Section musulmane,* pp. 159-170.

II. LITURGY

Saadia's liturgical productions are all embodied in his Ritual (סדור) as yet unpublished. This Ritual was very frequently quoted in the works of mediæval authors from the 12th century onward (see the references in Zunz, *Ritus*, p. 19; comp. Kohut, *Die Hoschanot des Gaon R. Saadia,* Breslau, 1893, reprint from *MGWJ.* of the same year, p. 1, n. 1), but no trace of it was known until the year 1851, when Steinschneider discovered it in a MS. of the Bodleian. The MS. though defective at the beginning and at the end, as well as in several parts in the middle, covers nevertheless 247 pages. With the exception of the incorporated prayers, hymns, etc., which are in the original Hebrew, the whole work is written in Arabic (in Hebrew characters). A minute description of the entire contents and numerous excerpts of the text were given by the discoverer in his Bodleian Catalogue, *coll.* 2203-2216, and later, with various additions, by Neubauer, in *Ben Chananja,* vol. VI (1863), 552 f., VII, 199, 234. Several scholars have since dealt with the Ritual of Saadia in part or as a whole, more recently J. Bondi, *Der Siddur des Rabbi Saadia Gaon* (reprint from *Rechenschafts-Bericht der jüdisch-literarischen Gesellschaft*), Frankfurt a/M., 1904 (comp. *ZfhB.*, IX, 104-107), who promised a critical edition of the entire work together with the numerous Genizah fragments of it that have of late come to light, partly supplying the missing portions of the *Siddūr* (comp. Neubauer-Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, no. 2701). As the beginning is lacking, the title is not positively ascertained, but from a passage occurring in the work it is

assumed with great probability that its name was *Kitâb ġawâmiʿ al-Ṣalawât wal-Tasâbîḥ* (כתאב גואמע אלצלואת ואלתסאביח), "A Book Comprising all the Prayers and Hymns" (comp. Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2204, and Neubauer, *Ben Chananja,* VI, 552, who, however, writes *ġâmi'*, the singular of *ġawâmi'*). It is also possible that Saadia himself designated it by the technical Hebrew name *Siddūr,* or *Sēder,* which was employed very early for prayer rituals (comp. Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2203). The title וגוב אלצלוה; in the ancient book-lists (*RÉJ.*, XXXIX, 200, no. 30; *Saadyana,* p. 128; *JQR.*, XIII, 330, no. 91; comp. also Graetz, *Geschichte* (4), V, 533, n. 2) refers either to the whole Introduction or to a chapter thereof [see below, p. 427].

A. Of Saadia's own liturgical compositions enbodied in the *Siddūr* and described above (pp. 147, 149 ff.) the following have so far been published:

1. *ʿAbōdāh* (עבודה), or, as Saadia calls it, *Pasūḳ* (פסוק), a hymn for the Musaf Prayer of Yom Kippūr, arranged alphabetically in 22 strophes of 8 lines each. It appeared in קובץ מעשי ידי גאונים קדמונים, edited by J. Rosenberg, Berlin, 1856, part II, pp. 10-17, with explanatory Hebrew notes by the editor; comp. Elbogen, *Studien zur Geschichte des jüdischen Gottesdienstes,* Berlin, 1907, pp. 64, 82 ff.

2. תרי"ג מצות, a Didactic Poem on the 613 Precepts, published with notes by Rosenberg, *ibid.*, pp. 30-38. The portion printed on pp. 26-29 is erroneously taken by the editor as an introduction to this poem; it does not belong there, as it is Saadia's Preface (פתיחה) to the *ʾAzhārōt* discussed below. The superscription מנין תרי"ג is an invention of the editor, as in the MS. the poem has no title; see Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2206; *AL.*, p. 68, n. 48. The same poem was more correctly edited with introduction and notes by Joel Müller in *Oeuvres complètes,* IX, pp. xviii-xxii, 57-69.

Recently the poem has been made the subject of an Halakic Work of enormous proportions by J. F. Perl (פערלא) of Warsaw, a private scholar of means. The work, three parts in four volumes, covering no less than *2060* pages in *folio,* appeared under the title ספר המצות לרס"ג, Warsaw, 1914-1917.

3. *'Azhārōt* (אזהרות), Exhortations, an extensive poem treating of the 613 precepts and their derivation from the Decalogue, edited by Rosenberg, *ibid.*, pp. 39-54. The introductory poem belonging to the *'Azhārōt* is found there, pp. 26-29 (see above, under no. 2, and the editor's note, p. ii). The *'Azhārōt* are quoted by Rashi to Exodus, 24, 12. A general essay by Michael Sachs on the *'Azhārōt* and other poems is published in the same volume, pp. 84-100; comp. Brody, *JE.*, II, 369*b*, 370*a*, bottom.

4. The two *Baḳḳāshōt* (בקשות), Supplications (see the description above, pp. 153 f.). Both found their way through unknown channels into the so-called "Romanian," that is, the Greco-Turkish Ritual (מחזור רומניא), which was first printed in Constantinople (1910; Berliner, *Aus meiner Bibliothek,* p. 3), and thence perhaps into several other Rituals (see *CB.*, 2211-2215, and especially L. Landshuth, עמודי העבודה, Berlin, 1862, p. 293), and into the work תפוחי זהב by Jehiel Melli, Mantua, 1623. In all the ritual editions and MSS. three liturgical pieces of later origin have been added to Saadia's בקשות, which were then erroneously attributed to the Gaon by some bibliographers. One, beginning תהלתך אין לה תחלה, is a hymn in rhymed prose by Solomon b. Elijah Sharbit ha-Zahab (14th century) and was prefixed to the second בקשה, beginning יי שפתי תפתח, while the two other pieces, which are anonymous, are found in the middle and at the end of the first בקשה, beginning אתה הוא יי לברך. A critical edition of the *Baḳḳāshōt,* based on the printed Rituals and on MSS. thereof, was published by Luzzatto in the *Literaturblatt des Orients,* 1851, pp. 387 ff.; comp. also Luzzatto, כרם חמד, IV, 36-39. By that time, however, Steinschneider had discovered the MS. of the סדור itself, and from a copy made by him the first בקשה was printed in the aforementioned קובץ of Rosenberg (pp. 74-77), while the second was reprinted there (pp. 78-83) from the edition of Luzzatto in the *Literaturblatt* *). In

* For the sake of bibliographic accuracy it should be stated here that except for this one *Baḳḳāshāh,* printed without indicating its source, all the liturgical compositions of Saadia, as also those of some others which he had embodied in his *Siddūr* (the עבודה

passing it should be mentioned that in the rituals and hence in the edition of Luzzatto and in the קובץ, the second *Baḳḳāshāh* is throughout in the plural, voicing the prayers of the whole community of Israel. This is not its original form, as it appears in the *Siddūr*. Saadia intended it for the individual. The rituals adapted it for the public worship and therefore changed all the singulars into plurals. Similar changes were made by the congregations in a ודוי referred to by Harkavy, הגרן, II, 87 f. Saadia's Arabic translation of this *Baḳḳāshāh* is also in the singular; comp. Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. xxv, *verso;* Derenbourg, *Manuel du Lecteur* (in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1870), p. 544, n. 5.

Finally the two *Baḳḳāshōt* were edited satisfactorily on the basis of a careful collation of the MS. with the edition of Luzzatto by L. Frumkin in his voluminous work, the סדר רב עמרם השלם, Jerusalem, 1912, part I, pp. ס"ד—ם"ז, II, pp. קס"א—קנ"ח; comp. also Schechter, *Saadyana*, nos. xix, xx, xxv.

It is highly interesting to note that Saadia's second *Baḳḳāshāh* (יי שפתי תפתח) has been made use of by the author of a Hebrew version of the Book of Tobit published by M. Gaster under the title *Two Unknown Hebrew Versions of Tobit*, London, 1897. The Hebrew text, which is considered by the editor as the original version of Tobit, contains several passages taken almost literally from Saadia's *Baḳḳāshāh;* comp. *ib.*, p. vii, and קובץ, II, 78 f. A comparison of the two texts makes it clear beyond a doubt that not Saadia, but the author of the version was the borrower.

It should also be noticed that most of the second *Baḳḳāshāh* has crept into the Italian, German, and Polish Festi-

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or פסוק of Jose b. Jose and another *'Abōdāh*, beginning אתה כוננת) found in the קובץ of Rosenberg were published from a copy furnished to the editor by Steinschneider together with an introductory description of the Bodleian MS. For reasons that cannot be discussed here the editor suppressed the introduction, as well as any indication of the source of his publication. Subsequently a special pamphlet was published by Steinschneider (*Der Siddur des Saadia Gaon*, Berlin, 1856), giving the history of the matter. Comp. also J. N. Epstein, *Der gaonäische Kommentar zur Ordnung Tohoroth*, Berlin, 1915, p. 132.

val-rituals (מחזורים), where it has been quite variously treated, showing numerous changes, transpositions, and additions; the latter being in part older than Saadia. In the Polish rituals extensive portions of this *Baḳḳāshāh* were incorporated into the Penitential Prayers (*Seliḥōt*) for the Eve of New-Year, beginning יהי . . . . זכו ברית אברהם רצון; this part of the poem, by reason of its content, is frequently designated as *Widdui* (Confession). Portions of Saadia's text are here interspersed among other pieces of different origin. The early incorporation of Saadia's composition into these liturgies in all probability led various mediæval authors to refer to a "*Widdui* of Saadia"; see for details on this matter Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 26; Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2215; Landshuth, עמודי העבודה, pp. 294-297, with numerous references, and Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte der synagogalen Poesie*, p. 96, no. 6; comp. also *Ha-Goren*, II, 86; *ZfhB.*, X, 148, top. There exists, however, another, short, composition, beginning אלהי נשמה, quoted by Dukes (*Zur Kenntniss der neuhebräischen religiösen Poesie*, p. 152) from a MS. of 1308, which is described as: וידוי דרב סעדיה, but Luzzatto (*Literaturblatt*, 1851, p. 487) and Steinschneider (*CB.*, 2215) deny the Gaon's authorship, assigning it to a later Saadia, and I am unable to reconcile their opinion with the fact that the same piece is now printed in the סדר רב עמרם השלם of Frumkin (II, p. קנ"ח), who states explicitly that he copied it from the MS. of Saadia's *Siddūr*. It is true that the MS. contains also a few later additions, such as *'Adōn 'Olam* (comp. Frumkin, I, p. כ"א), but this fact alone does not disprove Saadia's authorship in the case of other parts of the *Siddūr*, unless there is some other internal or external evidence against it.

5. *Hōsha'nōt* (הושענות). Hymns for the Feast of Tabernacles, especially the seventh day. Of these 21 were published by Kohut, *Die Hosha'not des Gaon R. Saadia*, Breslau, 1893, who gives also explanatory notes and numerous references to the literature on the subject. Kohut's publication is based on Yemenite MSS., but the same *Hōsha'nōt* are found also in the *Siddūr* and in the *Aleppo Maḥzōr*, Venice, 1526; see Kohut, p. 5; Neubauer, *Catalogue*, I, no. 1096, and in *Semitic Studies*

in Memory of Dr. Alexander Kohut, pp. 388 f.; Berliner, *Aus meiner Bibliothek,* Frankfurt a/M., 1898, p. 7. For additions and emendations to Kohut's edition, see Halberstam, *MGWJ.,* 1895, pp. 111f.; comp. S. Sachs, אוצר הספרות, IV, 109; Frumkin, *l. c.,* II, 384; Bondi, *Der Siddur des R. Saadia,* p. 37.

6. *Seliḥōt* (סליחות) and *Teḥinnōt* (תחנות), Penitential and Devotional Prayers, a large number of which are found in the MS. of the *Siddūr,* as also in other MSS. (*CB.,* 2211), some recently found in the Genizah (Bondi, p. 40). Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2210 f., quotes from the *Siddūr* the beginnings of 50 *Selīḥōt,* 23 of which were destined by Saadia for the Day of Atonement; and 27 for other fast days. They have been characterized by Zunz in his various works; see the references in Landshuth's עמודי העבודה, pp. 297-299. Part of a *Selīḥāh* was metrically translated into German by Zunz, *Synagogale Poesie,* p. 164. The *Teḥinnōt* (the beginnings of some of which are likewise quoted in *CB.,* 2211), partly Aramaic, fill the last ten pages of the MS. of the *Siddūr,* which is here defective. Nine additional pages of *Teḥinnōt* were later found in the Genizah (Bondi, p. 40), and there are probably many more of such productions among the Genizah fragments. It is not safe to assume that all the *Hōsha'nōt, Selïḥōt* and *Teḥinnōt* in the *Siddūr* were composed by Saadia himself. Some of them he probably took from older sources and incorporated in his work, just as he did with the עבודה of Jose b. Jose and the so-called *French* אתה בוננת (comp. Luzzatto in Rosenberg's קובץ, pp. 107-110). In the case of the *Hōsha'nōt* he states explicitly that there existed a very large number of them (*CB.,* 2209; Kohut, p. 2). The solution of this question does not belong here. Many of these *Piyyūṭim* have found their way anonymously into nearly all the festival and fast day rituals in MS. and in print. A detailed enumeration and classification of the individual pieces transcends the scope of this Bibliography and should be undertaken by others (see Landshuth, p. 298).

The numerous *quotations* from the *Siddūr* in the works of mediæval authors, often without explicit mention of the source, were collected among citations of other works of

Saadia (a quotation in the כל בו, Zunz, *Zur Geschichte,* p. 549, seems to have been overlooked) by Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, 145-173; comp. *ib.,* pp. xxxviii-xl. The details relating to these quotations cannot be taken up here; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 67, n. 28.

Very numerous *extracts* from the MS. of the *Siddūr* are given by Frumkin in his סדר רב עמרם referred to above (pp. 332 f.). Most of these extracts represent Saadia's text of the traditional prayers, such as *Grace* after meals, the *Ḳiddūsh, Ḳaddish, Ḳedūshāh, Shemōnēh-'esrēh, Passover Haggadah,* and many others, showing numerous variants in the phraseology, which are of great importance for the history of Jewish liturgy. There are, however, among the extracts *piyyūṭim* of Saadia's own composition. Frumkin's index is rather confused. The following is a list of the passages in consecutive order, omitting a few minor references: I, 154, 184, 194 f., קי"ט, 238, 242, קכ"ב, קמ"ה, 298, קנ"ט, 334, 360, 368, 382; II, ד', כ"ג, נ"ד, ס"ז, 132, פ"ב f., ק', ק"ח f., ק"ט, ק"ל, קל"ב, 286-288, 328, קס"ו, 352, 356, 384, קצ"ד, קצ"ה, קצ"ו, 414.

B. Within the last decades there have come to light several liturgical compositions which are not in the extant *Siddūr,* but have been otherwise identified as Saadia's. These may be enumerated in the order of publication:

1. *Ta'ame Teki'ōt* (טעמי תקיעות), ten Reasons for the Blowing of the Shofar on New-Year's Day, embodied in numerous festival rituals in the name of Saadia, translated into German by Dukes, *Zur Kenntniss der neuhebräischen religiösen Poesie* (Frankf. a/M., 1842), pp. 53 f. It was also put in German verse by S. L. Heilberg in his נטעי נעמנים, Breslau, 1847, pp. xiv f. According to Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2205, it originally formed part of Saadia's Commentary on Leviticus, 23, 24 (see above, under Bible, letter *o*). The piece is printed also in Müller's לקוטים, *Oeuvres,* IX, 165 f., no. 106; comp. Rapoport, בכה"ע, IX, 28, n. 21.

2. *Reshūt* (רשות) to *'Azhārōt,* an introduction containing a division into 24 or 25 classes (comp. *JQR., N. S.,* vol. IV (1913-1914), p. 539, n. 59) of the 613 precepts, which are treated in the *'Azhārōt.* It was written originally in Hebrew, but only the Arabic translation of the first 20 classes is extant,

being embodied in a fragment of an anonymous Arabic work. It was published by Neubauer, *JQR.*, VI (1894), 705-7; comp. Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. xv; *JQR.*, 1913-1914, pp. 539 ff. Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 122, is unaware of Neubauer's publication.

3. *Haḳḳāfōt* (הקפות), a number of hymns for recitation during the processional circuits around the *almemar* on the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Hosha'na Rabbah). They were edited by Neubauer in *Semitic Studies in Memory of A. Kohut*, Berlin, 1897, pp. 390 f., but Halberstam in a marginal note in his copy of the aforementioned work (now in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, from which it was communicated to me by Professor Marx) called attention to the fact that of the seven *Haḳḳāfōt* edited by Neubauer only the first can claim the Gaon's authorship, the remaining six having been added by a later author, who shows familiarity with the Ten *Sefirōt*, a Ḳabalistic idea of subsequent centuries. These *Haḳḳāfōt*, Halberstam shows, are identical with the *Hōsha'nōt* in the Sefardic ritual.

4. Liturgy on the Ten Commandments for the Feast of Weeks (סדר לעצרת עלי עשר הדברות) in several sections, following the order of א"ב and תי"ק alternately. This composition, too, was edited by Neubauer in *Semitic Studies* (see the preceding number), pp. 392-395. On the basis of the date 851 occurring in the text (p. 394, top) the editor assumes in a note *ad locum* that the liturgy was composed in the year 920, that is, 851 years after the destruction of the Second Temple, but Halberstam in the manuscript note on the margin of his copy (see the preceding no. 3) proved that the date does not refer to the destruction of the Temple; see for the interpretation of the passage Bacher, *RÉJ.*, XXXV, 290-291, who gives it as a private communication of Halberstam. The latter, Bacher further reports, made the ingenious suggestion that the words גבר חכם בעז at the beginning of the composition (p. 392, l. 20) contain an allusion to Saadia as the author; for their numerical value (352) is the same as that of סעיד בן יוסף; see above, note 332.

5. פזמון לחתן, "Hymn for a Bridegroom" in four stanzas, each containing three lines with a double rhyme and ending

with the refrain ישמח (*sc.* חתן בכלה). It was published from a MS. collection of old *piyyūṭim* by S. A. Wertheimer in גנזי ירושלם, III (Jerusalem, 1902), 16 *b*; comp. *ib.*, Introduction, pp. 7 f. For the refrain see Saphir, אבן ספיר, I, 81 *b*; מחזור ויטרי, pp. 599, 602.*

פזמון לחתן

אורך יאיר מאירו האצור ומכל רע תהיה נצור
כאחור וקדם נצרוני צור וקרא שמות לכל יצור
גם כלה תמליט זכר כהכה צור[2] בלא עצב ולא עצור
ישמח [חתן בכלה].

ברכה תהיה בארץ ותנצל מכל פרץ
כנמלט משטיפת הארץ[3] ומזרעו נפצה כל הארץ
נם כלה בחתן תירץ וידגו לרוב בקרב הארץ
ישמח.

נילה וחדוה תעדה נא מכל צד ומכל פנה
כיעץ נפשות בחרנה[4] וקרבם תחת כנפי השכינה
גם כלה כליותיה תעלוזנה כנתחדשה לה ערנה[5]
ישמח.

החתן במלבושים והכלה בקדושים
הוא יפה באנשים והיא יפה בנשים ושניהם מקורשים
זה בזה יבורכו בפרושים כאל נעריך בסוד קדושים[6]
ישמח.

WEDDING SONG

From God's treasury of light may thy light shine forth and be thou guarded from all ill,
Like him whom God created aforetime, who gave names to all creatures.
Be the bride blessed with a son like him that smote the rock; nor suffer pain, nor grieve for barrenness.
Rejoice, O bridegroom, in thy bride!

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* Among the numerous poetic productions of Saadia this poem is the only one known of a rather secular nature. The English translation was prepared by Dr. Solomon Solis Cohen of Philadelphia:

[1] Read יְצָרוֹ, allusion to Adam; see Ps. 139, 5, Gen. 2, 20.
[2] Allusion to Moses, Numbers, 20, 11; Ps. 78, 20.
[3] Allusion to Noah, Gen. 9, 19.
[4] Abraham, Gen. 12, 5; see *Bereshit rabbah, c.* 39, 14.
[5] Sarah, Gen. 18, 12.
[6] Ps. 89, 8.

Mayest thou be a blessing in the land, mayest thou be spared misfortune,
Like him that escaped the flood, and with his offspring peopled all the earth.
May the bride delight in her husband; may they grow to a multitude in the land.
Rejoice, O bridegroom, in thy bride!
Mirth and happiness encompass thee, joys thronging from every side,
As with him that made souls in Haran, and brought them under the wings of the Shekinah.
May thy bride be thrilled with thy caresses; and in age be her youth renewed.
Rejoice, O bridegroom, in thy bride!
The bridegroom in his gay attire, the bride bedecked with rich wedding gifts—
Is he not handsomest of men? Is not she fairest among women? O beauteous twain made one!
May they be blessed with a special blessing by Him that is revered in the council of the holy ones.
Rejoice, O bridegroom, in thy bride!

6. A few fragmentary *Piyyūṭim* in Schechter's *Saadyana,* nos. xvii, xxii, xxiii. The *Seliḥah* for the Fast of Gedaliah (no. xviii), beginning אבלה נפשי וחשך תארי, is printed in numerous rituals and is found also in the MS. of Saadia's *Siddūr,* so also *Saadyana,* no. xxi, for which see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2210; Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, nos. 2720, 18; 2847, 11. In the מחזור אהלי יעקב לרה"ש, the ritual for the New-Year Festival according to the *Sefardim,* with a learned commentary by the editor, Jacob Izhakovitch, Jerusalem, 1908, the latter erroneously remarks (p. קנ"ח) that the author of the aforementioned *Seliḥah* is not known (לא נודע מחברו).

7. *'Abōdah,* beginning אלהים יה מקדם, in four א"ב, incomplete, ending with the first line of the letter צ, published by Elbogen, *Studien zur Geschichte des jüdischen Gottesdienstes,* Berlin, 1907, pp. 122-125; comp. Elbogen's characterization of the *'Abōdah, ib.,* p. 83.

8. *Tokeḥah* (תוכחה, Arabic מרתיה), an extensive poem arranged according to the letters of the alphabet with four lines to each letter. It was published with introduction

and explanatory notes by H. Brody, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 83-99, who had previously published part of it in Berliner's *Festschrift,* pp. 9-11; comp. Bacher's notes and corrections to Brody's edition, *JQR.*, N. S., Vol. IV (1913-14), pp. 119 f. [For a couplet on Purim see *JQR., N. S.,* XI, 465, n. 32.]

For a general characterization of Saadia as a liturgist see Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte,* pp. 93-98, and lately Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst,* Leipzig, 1913, pp. 321-324.

There is one more composition to be accounted for here. This is Saadia's "Poem on the Number of Letters" (see above, pp. 154 ff.), which, not being liturgical, must be considered separately. The Poem appears under different titles. The MSS. in Neubauer's *Catalogue,* I, nos. 79, 869, have חרוזות על האותיות, the fragment in *Saadyana,* p. 52, has only פיוט לר"ס, while some editions have שיר instead of חרוזות. In Derenbourg's *Manuel du lecteur* the title is merely מנין האותיות, while in Benjacob's *Thesaurus* it is recorded as אותיות דרב סעדיה (see Harkavy, היקב, I, 46). From *Saadyana,* no. xvi (l. 1 *recto* and l. 3 *verso*) it would appear that the original title was, as in Derenbourg's *Manuel,* מנין האותיות and that שיר or חרוזות על is a later modification.

The poem has been repeatedly published in connection with other works; the first time in Elijah Levita's מסרת המסרת, Venice, 1538, also with a Latin translation by the elder Buxtorf in his work on the Masorah, *Tiberias,* Basle, 1620, p. 183 (second edition, Basle, 1665, p. 171; comp. Steinschneider, *ZfhB.,* II, 94), and by Fürst in his *Concordance,* p. 1379. For other editions see Steinschneider, *Bibliographisches Handbuch,* Leipzig, 1859, p. 121, where no less than twelve editions are enumerated. To these are still to be added: (1) In Chr. D. Ginsburg's edition of Levita's מסרת המסרת, London, 1867, pp. 269-278; (2) in his *The Massorah,* vol. I, London, 1880, letter א, § 224 (from a MS. in the British Museum, Or. 1379; comp. Blau, *JQR.,* VIII, 348, n. 1), and (3) in J. Derenbourg's *Manuel du lecteur, Journal Asiatique,* 1870, pp. 447-457 (separate edition, pp. 139-149); comp. the general discussion *ib.,* pp. 542-549 (234-241).

In Samuel Ashkenazi's collection נובלות חכמה, Basle, 1629-1631, which contains our poem (fol. 196), the latter is for the first time ascribed to one Saadia b. Joseph, surnamed Bekor Shor, and the father of this Saadia is supposed to be identical with the famous French Bible exegete Joseph Bekor Shor of the 12th century. Zunz (*Zur Geschichte,* p. 75), *Luzzatto* (*Literaturblatt des Orients,* XII, 132), Steinschneider, (*Bibliographisches Handbuch,* p. 121, and *CB.,* 2225), and others, following the testimony of Ashkenazi, denied the Gaon's authorship of this poem and ascribed it likewise to this Saadia Bekor Shor, whose name does not occur elsewhere in Jewish literature (comp. Azulai, שם הגדולים, ed. Benjacob, I, 150). Derenbourg, *Manuel,* pp. 542 (234) ff., has shown on general grounds the untenability of this view and attributes the poem to the Gaon; comp. also *ib.,* p. 449 (141), n. 13. He is followed by Bacher, *JE., II,* 649, who properly proposes to strike the name of Saadia Bekor Shor from the list of Jewish authors altogether. This view is now fully borne out and the Gaon's authorship positively established by the Genizah fragment in Schechter's *Saadyana* no. xxvi (comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 10, n. 2), which contains part of the poem and explicitly mentions the Gaon twice as its author; comp. Neubauer, *Catalogue,* I, p. 969; Lambert, in Harkavy's *Festschrift,* p. 390, n. 4.*).

* The mistake, I believe, has the following origin. The name of the Gaon is current in Hebrew literature merely as רבנו סעדיה, very often ר' סעדיה גאון, and sometimes ר' סעדיה הפיתומי, but very rarely ר' סעדיה בן יוסף. The editor who probably found the title "Saadia b. Joseph" may have failed to identify the name with that of the Gaon and, as among the few Josephs of the earlier Middle Ages who dealt with Hebrew grammar and Bible exegesis (as Joseph Ḳimḥi), Bekor Shor was one of the most prominent, he volunteered this unfounded addition to the name of Joseph. This lack of criticism should not surprise us in a sixteenth century author. Elijah Levita, otherwise an excellent scholar, who, as mentioned before, edited our poem, gives as a reason for attributing it to Saadia Gaon the fact that "difficult and strange words, like those occurring therein, have been used by Saadia in his *Sefer Emunot.*" It shows that

S. Eppenstein (Beitrage, p. 123, n. 1), not knowing of the existence of the poem and the literature thereon, informs the reader that in the Genizah fragment in Schechter's *Saadyana* we have "one of the hitherto unknown liturgical poems of Saadia"(!). On the same page he attributes to Saadia an Arabic commentary on the daily *Shemōnēh-'Esrēh* ("eine Erklärung der Tefilla"), and counts this commentary among "the otherwise unknown poetical writings" of the Gaon. He was led to this curious mistake by the fragment in *Saadyana,* no. xxv, which bears the heading תפסיר י"י שפתי לר' סעדיה ז"ל, followed by three lines of the Arabic text. This text, however, is Saadia's Arabic translation of his own second *Baḳḳāshāh* (see above, p. 153), which is introduced by the verse י"י שפתי תפתח (Ps., 51, 17), as is the *Shemōneh-Esrēh.* Hence Eppenstein's error. A comparison of this fragment with that in *Saadyana,* no. xx, might have helped him out of the difficulty.

III. HALAKAH

A. METHODOLOGY

1. *Kitâb al-Madḫal* [*'ila al-Talmûd*] (כתאב אלמדכל [אלי אלתלמוד]), "Book of Introduction [to the Talmud]." The earliest references to this work are found in an ancient book-list, coming from the Genizah, which was published by Bacher, *RÉJ.,* XXXIX (1899), 200, no. 28, and in a fragment of a similar list in Schechter's *Saadyana,* no. xlvii (p. 128). Five passages from the Arabic original of

Levita thought Saadia, who wrote in Arabic, to be the author of the Hebrew translation (*i. e.* the anonymous *Paraphrase;* comp. Zunz, in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* X, 6); comp. Dukes, *Beiträge,* II, 102; Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2225; Derenbourg, *Manuel,* p. 548 (240); Ginsburg, *l. c.* p. 269.

It is, finally, worth noticing that the addition of Bekor Shor to Joseph (based on Deuter., 33, 17) was made in several other instances, either by the bearers of the name Joseph themselves, or by others (see Poznański, פרוש על יחזקאל ותרי עשר לר' אליעזר מבלגנצי, p. lviii, top), so that in our case it is not even necessary to assume that the real Joseph Bekor Shor was meant; comp. Rapoport בכה"ע, XI, 84, who, as I found later, proposes the same solution.

Saadia in a Hebrew translation are cited by the famous sixteenth century Talmudist Bezalel Ashkenazi, Rabbi in Egypt and later (1558) in Jerusalem. The middle section of Bezalel's work, called כללי התלמוד, in which the citations occur, was recently published by Marx from a unique MS. of The Jewish Theological Seminary, in the *Festschrift* of David Hoffmann, Berlin, 1914, Hebrew part, pp. 179-217; see *ib.*, pp. 196 f. (nos. 228, 229), 204 (no. 319), 210 (nos. 369, 372). The passages were partly reproduced from Bezalel's work by Solomon Algâzi (17th century) and by Azulai and thence by Müller, *Oeuvres,* ix, 168, nos. 119, 121; comp. Marx, *ib.,* German part, p. 375, n. 4; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 50, no. 10; Harkavy תשובות הגאונים, p. 399, note to p. 392; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 163. The fragment published in *JQR.,* XIII, 55, no. 92 (see also *ib.,* p. 330) is perhaps from our work. It should be noted that the Arabic title does not expressly state that the work is an introduction to the *Talmud,* though it doubtless was. Bezalel emphasizes the fact that Saadia called the work דרכי התלמוד. For a possible identification of this work with the כתאב אלשראיע see below, *Bibliography,* section VII, p. 400, no. 13.

2. פרוש י"ג מדות, "Commentary on the 13 Hermeneutic Rules." Derenbourg reported that he had seen the Arabic original among the MSS. of the late Baron Günzburg; see Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xxiii. The Hebrew translation was first published by Schechter, בית תלמוד, IV (1885), 235-244, and then by Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, 73-83; comp. *ib.,* pp. xxiii,-xxxiii, xlii; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 50, no. 11, whose doubts as to Saadia's authorship can no longer be justified; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 162 f. As to the anti-Ḳaraite tendency of the work suspected by Schechter in his Introduction to the edition, see Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 258 f., *RÉJ.,* XLVII, 136; above, note 548.

B. COMMENTARIES

1. פרוש רב סעדיה גאון על מסכת ברכות, "Commentary on the Tractate *Berakōt,*" published from a Genizah MS. in the Arabic original with a Hebrew translation, Introduction,

and notes by S. A. Wertheimer, Jerusalem, 1908 (see *RÉJ.*, LVIII, 150; above, note 360). Its authenticity is maintained by Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 164, and Aptowitzer, *MGWJ.*, LII (1908), 302, but doubted, respectively denied, by Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 118, n. 3 (*MGWJ.*, 1911, p. 65, n. 4), and Poznański, *JQR., N. S.*, vol. III (1912-1913), p. 410, and more recently again by J. N. Epstein, *Der gaonäische Kommentar zur Ordnung Tohoroth,* Berlin, 1915, pp. 29 ff. There is no conclusive evidence for either side; but so much appears certain that in its present form the Commentary is *not* the work of Saadia. On the other hand, the short passage given in the MS. explicitly in the name of Saadia and placed by the editor at the beginning of the Commentary (see his Introduction, p. 11; Epstein, *l. c.*, p. 31) is admitted as genuine even by those who otherwise deny Saadia's authorship. Several other passages in the Commentary make it also very probable that the compiler made use of a commentary by Saadia on the same tractate (see above, note 360). The אלפאט ברכות (Vocabulary of *Berakōt*), mentioned in the ancient list, *JQR.*, XIII, 54, no. 45 (comp. also תפסיר, אלפאט אלתלמוד, *ib.*, no. 67, and Bacher, *REJ.*, XXXIX, 203), may well refer to the work in question, for though it does not bear Saadia's name, there are in the same list other books which are positively known as Saadia's (see nos. 32, 59, 69, 77), and yet his name is not added (comp. this *Bibliography,* below, section VII, p. 396, no. 3). There is, indeed, no more reason to ascribe it, with Poznański (*JQR.*, XIII, 326, no 45, and Schechter's *Saadyana,* p. 21, no. 7), to Sherira or Hai than to Saadia. For it is now certain that like Hai, Saadia too wrote commentaries on the Mishnah, which he may have extended also to some tractates of the Talmud. Thus, it has recently been established that the so-called פרוש על סדר טהרות quoted by many mediæval authors as a work of Hai and published under his name by J. Rosenberg in the קובץ מעשי ידי גאונים קדמונים, Berlin, 1856, I, 1-55, is essentially a work of Saadia redacted by a later author (J. N. Epstein, *l. c.*, pp. 29-36; comp. above, note 387). Like the פרוש on *Berakōt* so also the one on *Ṭeharōt* is but a col-

lection of short glosses and lexical notes (see the detailed characterization of Epstein) and as in the case of the אלפאט ברכות so in that of the אלפאט אלמשנה, mentioned in the Genizah list (Saadyana, p. 79; Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 21, no. 7) it is a work of Saadia that is referred to; comp. also אלפאט זרעים ומועד משנה, *REJ.,* XXXIX, p. 200, no. 33, for which again Bacher, *ib.,* p. 203, unnecessarily suggests Sherira or Hai as authors. See also above, notes 359, 590; Epstein, *l. c.,* pp. 152 f. To the class of Mishnah-commentaries by Saadia belongs also the תפסיר אבות מלאכות for which see above, note 366.

C. CODIFICATION

1. *Kitâb al-Mawârîṯ* (כתאב אלמואריית), "Book on the Laws of Inheritance," first discovered by Steinschneider in a Bodleian MS. (CB., 2160; *Bibliotheca Mathematica,* 1894, p. 102; *idem, Vorlesungen über die Kunde hebräischer Handschriften,* Leipzig, 1897, p. 34). In 1891 S. Fuchs first copied the MS., gave a survey of its contents, and translated a portion thereof into Hebrew (החוקר, I, 9-12, 41 f.). Joel Müller then edited the whole in *Oeuvres complètes de Saadia,* IX (Paris, 1897), 1-53. The Arabic text is accompanied by a Hebrew translation (prepared by S. Horovitz under the title ספר הירושות), introduction, and notes with additions by Harkavy; comp. Goldziher, *"Observations," RÉJ.,* XXXVIII, 270; Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters,* p. xxiii; idem, *Arabische Mathematiker,* in Peiser's *Orientalistische Litteraturzeitung,* Berlin, 1904, no. 6, pp. 206 f., where the general character of the work in its relation to similar works of Muhammedan authors is minutely discussed; comp. also Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 48, and Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 165 f. The work is mentioned in several Genizah lists: *REJ.,* XXXII, 127; *JQR.,* XIII, 54, no. 42; comp. Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, 2827, 3.

*The works preserved entirely or in fragments come first, the others, known only from quotations, follow in alphabetical order.

2. *Aḥkâm al-Wadî'a* (אחכאם אלודיעה), "Laws on Pledges." Two considerable Arabic fragments were published by Schechter, *Saadyana,* nos. xi-xii, where the above title occurs twice. The book is also mentioned, under a somewhat different title (which seems to refer to an abridged edition of the original, hence מכתצר אלודיעה), in an old Responsum (Harkavy, תשובות הגאונים, no. 454; comp. *ib.*, p. 393, top, reprinted in *Oeuvres,* IX, 146, no. 8), [and *JQR., N. S.,* XI, 425]; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 49, no. 5, where for 362 read 393; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 166; Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 4; *JQR.,* N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 410. Mediæval authors (see Dukes נחל קדומים, p. 25) quote the book also under the Hebrew title ספר הפקדון, see Steinschneider, *l. c.* The fragment recently edited by I. Friedländer under this title as the treatise of Saadia (Isr. Lewy's *Festschrift,* pp. 60-72) belongs to a work of a later author; see Friedländer, *MGWJ.,* 1911, p. 501; Poznański, *JQR.,* N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 410.

3. *Kitâb al-Shahâdah wal-Waṭâiḳ* (כתאב אלשהאדה ואלוثאיק), "Book on Testimony and Contracts," quoted by Hebrew authors (see below) under the title ספר שטרות. A small Arabic Fragment containing the introductory lines of this treatise was published with an English translation by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVI, 294, 299. The definition of *truth* given in this fragment is found, partly in the same words, in the *Kitâb al-Amânât,* p. 16, ll. 4 f. Saadia says here explicitly that this treatise is the first in a series of his writings on civil law, and that he chose the subject of testimony first, because the people had special need of its elucidation. Two passages from this treatise are reproduced in Arabic by Saadia's opponent R. Mubashshir (מבשר), quoted by Harkavy, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xxxvii, no. 2 (comp. also his חדשים גם ישנים, I, no. 9). The treatise is mentioned in the Genizah lists, *JQR.,* XIII, 55, no. 78; p. 329, no. 78; *Saadyana,* p. 128 (where read פי אלשהאדאת for פילש הנדאת); *RÉJ.,* XXXII, 200, no. 38 (comp. Bacher, *ad locum,* p. 203); [*JQR., N. S.,* XI, 425], perhaps also in no. 2760, 13, of Neubauer and Cowley's *Catalogue,* II; comp. Poznański, *ZfhB.*,

X, 141. For quotations of the treatise in the works of Hebrew authors see Rapoport, בכה"ע, xi, 83; *Oeuvres,* IX, 145, nos. 1, 4; p. 150, no. 22; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 49, no. 6 (where for "Lese n. 40" read Lese, nos. 1, 4, 22); Harkavy, תשובות הגאונים, p. 362, bottom; Judah b. Barzillai, ם' השטרות, ed. Halberstam, Berlin, 1898, p. 55, n. 3.

4. *Tafsîr al-'Arāyōt* (תפסיר אלעריות), "Interpretation of the Laws of Incest," of which a lengthy Arabic fragment (four leaves) was edited with an English translation and introductory remarks by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVII, 713-720. Another portion of the same work seems to be embodied in an Arabic fragment edited by Schechter, *Saadyana,* no. xvi, p. 44, ll. 17 ff.; comp. Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah,* p. 7, n. 3, and p. 99; *idem, Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur,* p. 42. A lengthy quotation in Hebrew was published from a MS. work of the Ḳaraite Jeshu'ah b. Judah (11th century) by Steinschneider, in מגד ירחים, edited by Joseph Kohen-Zedeḳ, Lemberg, 1856, III, 176, partly also in *CB.,* 2163, reprinted by Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, 171 f., no. 136. The work of Jeshu'ah under the title ספר העריות has since been edited by J. Markon, St. Petersburg, 1908, where the passage occurs on pp. 151-152; comp. Poznański, *Karaite Literary Opponents,* p. 53. The arabic title of Saadia's work is not preserved. The title given above is based on the citation of Jeshu'ah, who has פתרון העריות. In the body of the Arabic fragment Saadia repeatedly uses the arabicized Hebrew term אלעריות and applies to it the verb פסר (See Hirschfeld, *l. c.,* p. 717, ll. 15, 29-32). Azulai, שם הגדולים, ed. Benjacob I, 150 f., mentions a book on אסורי ביאה, which may refer to the work before us. I must admit, however, that although, following the bibliographers here referred to, I have placed this treatise among those dealing with the codification of the law, I am not at all convinced that it actually belongs here, or that a work of Saadia under that title was composed separately. Neither the Arabic fragments nor the Hebrew quotations and references furnish sufficient evidence for such assumption. I am rather inclined to think that we have here an extract from Saadia's

commentary on Leviticus, 18, which, like some other sections of his lengthy Pentateuch commentary, may have circulated separately and may thus be identical with the תפסיר אחרי מות, in Schechter's *Saadyana,* no. xxxvii (p. 79, l. 7); see below, section VII, p. 396, no. 3; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 49, no. 8. That the passage in *Oeuvres,* IX, p. 35, n. 1 (comp. Müller, end of the Introduction, p. xvii) refers to the work, is not certain.

5. *Kitâb al- Terēfōt* (כתאב אלטרפות), "Book on Forbidden Food." A treatise with this title is mentioned twice in a Genizah fragment, Schechter, *Saadyana,* no. xxvii, while no. xlix represents a small portion of the treatise (in Arabic characters, which is a very rare occurrence). Another fragment in two different recensions, one covering four and the other two leaves, is found in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg (see below, p. 349, no. 10). A short extract from each of the two recensions was given by Harkavy, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xxxvii (see *Ha-Goren,* I, 91). Both MSS. bear the title הלכות שחיטה, under which title a fragment is found also in the Bodleian Library (Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* no. 2854A, 7; comp. also *Saadyana,* no. xxxvii, p. 79, l. 10). The title כתאב אלמניאה (Grünhut, *MGWJ.,* L. (1906), 88, quotes אלמנאיה?) referred to by Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 18, perhaps misspelt for מניה (maniyya=death), expresses the same idea as כתאב אלטרפות or שחיטה. It is hard to decide which was the original title; probably the former, which was replaced in some texts by the more usual terms טרפות and שחיטה, since all the laws designated by these terms were probably included in the work. For further references see Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 49, no. 9. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* pp. 121, 217, failing to perceive the identity of the two works, speaks of two different treatises, on שחיטה and טרפות.

6. *Ḳawl fi'l-Ribâ* (קול פי אלרבא), "Treatise on Usury." This is the heading of a fragment from the Genizah published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVIII, 119 f. No reference to it elsewhere is known to me.

7. ספר טמאה וטהרה, "On Defilement and Purity," quoted by several mediæval authors, see Rapoport, בכורי העתים, IX, 28, n. 19; Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2162, no. 8, *AL.*, p. 49, no. 7; Müller, *Oeuvres,* IX, 159, no. 74. The treatise is mentioned also in the Genizah lists, *RÉJ.,* XXXIX, 200, no. 13 (comp. *ib.,* p. 205, no. 2), and *Saadyana,* no. xxxvii, in the latter place under the title מכתצר טמאה וטהרה "Compendium on Defilement and Purity"; comp. Poznański, *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur,* p. 41 f. According to Rapoport, *l. c.,* p. 22, and Steinschneider, *l. c.,* this treatise and the one mentioned below, no. 10, formed one work, a view which seems to be supported by the extant quotations. Lately I found the book quoted by Meir ha-Kohen (13th cent.) in הגהות מימוניות, section אסורי ביאה § 7, letter א; comp. Azulai, שם הגדולים, ed. Benjacob, *s. v.* Saadia, who mentions a book on טהרות.

8. ספר המתנות, *i. e.* a book on laws regulating the legal acquisition of objects received by gift. The work is quoted by Naḥmanides in his *Novellæ* on the tractate *Ḳiddūshin,* see Benjacob, *Thesaurus,* p. 389, no. 2624; Harkavy, *Ha-Goren,* II, 89. At the beginning of his "Book on Inheritance" (*Oeuvres,* IX, 9; comp. *ib.,* p. xv) Saadia states that "the transfer of objects from one person to another takes place in one of three ways, either by inheritance, by purchase, or by gift. Each of these three has its own laws and provisions, of which we will here explain first those concerning inheritance, which are the subject of the present treatise." It is obvious from this passage that he intended to treat also of the other two. We have, however, no quotation from a work by Saadia on Laws of Purchase. That on Gifts was in existence as late as the 13th century; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 48, no. 4; Rappoport, בכה"ע, XI, 83.

9. מתנות כהונה, "On the Priestly Gifts." A work under this title is attributed to Saadia in a fragment in Schechter's *Saadyana,* no. xxvii. It is also mentioned, but without the name of Saadia, in the list, *REJ.,* XXXIX, 200, no. 30, and *Saadyana,* no. xlvii, p. 128; comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* p. 18, no. 2.

10. הלכות נדה, "Laws on Menstruation," quoted by Saadia in his *Commentary* on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* ed. Lambert, p. 43, l. 12 (כמא שרחנא פי אמר מצות נדה) and by several mediaeval authors; see *Oeuvres,* IX, 157, n. 5; *MGWJ.,* XVII, 276. Codex Antonini, 155, contains the end of הלכות נדה, followed by הלכות שחיטה (above, no. 5); see Harkavy, הקדם, I, 63 f. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 119, n. 1, asserts that the work is mentioned in the lists referred to above (no. 9), no doubt through confusing it with some other work. His assertion that it was written in Egypt is likewise groundless, see above, note 293. According to Rapoport and Steinschneider, it was not a separate work, but formed part of no. 7 (see above); comp. Wertheimer, פרוש רב סעדיה על ברכות, pp. 6 f., no. 5.

D. RESPONSA, תשובות.

Saadia's Responsa have been collected from various sources and reprinted with numerous literary notes by Joel Müller, in *Oeuvres,* IX, 87-142. Altogether there are fifty Responsa in this collection, but the differentiation of the editor between the Responsa and other pieces which are arranged in the same volume under the heading of *Quotations* (see below) is not always accurate. Thus no. 50 is not a Responsum, but Saadia's reply to a Ḳaraite, probably Ibn Sâḳawaihi, against whom he wrote a polemic, whence the passage in question may have been taken (comp. Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 253; below, p. 383, letter *f*). On the other hand, no. 110 of the quotations bears the heading תשובה and belongs to the Responsa. Moreover, not all the Responsa bear the name of Saadia, and in several instances the authorship is not certain, see *e. g.* nos. 22, 23, 38, 46. One Responsum (27) is in Arabic, in another (42) the question is in Arabic, while the Gaon deliberately answers in Hebrew. At the head of ten Responsa (2, 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 15-17, 21) we find the remark "translated from the Arabic"; the translations being anonymous. The original language of the rest of the Responsa is not always certain, see Müller's Introduction, pp. xxxiv ff. Two Responsa (4, 16) were translated into

German in a condensed form by Zacharias Frankel, in *Entwurf einer Geschichte der Literatur der nachtalmudischen Responsen,* Breslau, 1865, pp. 81-83; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 48 (the passage is badly printed: line 12 for "N. 8, 14, *27*" read *N. 27, 42;* line 13 after "(Lese)" read *darunter 8, 14 arabisch;* line 16 for "erstere" read *letztere;* line 17 read "GA. 49, 50 (50 aus Abr. b. Chijja über Kalender)." For additional Responsa of Saadia see Harkavy, *Ha-Goren,* II, 89. The מסאיל in the list, *REJ.,* XXXIX, p. 206, no. 6, may also belong here [but see *Postscript,* p. 427]. A Kaminka in Winter and Wünsche's *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II, 39 f., published a German translation of Responsum no. 16, without stating that it had previously been translated by Frankel.

E. QUOTATIONS, לקוטים.

It was no small task to collect, from the vast mediæval literature, all the passages quoted from Saadia's writings by various authors. This work was undertaken by Müller, who gathered 136 passages (*Oeuvres,* IX, 145-173), to which a considerable number were added by Harkavy in the same volume, pp. xxxvii-xliv. Over two-thirds of these quotations are taken from Saadia's *Siddūr,* the rest from works mostly lost. I cannot take up each of the quotations for separate discussion, but a few points may be briefly touched upon. Nos. 8, 14, 134 (the last is from the Commentary on Proverbs, 18, 17), 135, are Arabic. For no. 13 see Harkavy, *ib.,* p. xliv; Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, no. 2745, 23; for no. 46 comp. *Kitâb al-Amânât,* p. 183 (*Em.,* Cracow, p. 123), overlooked by Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 252; for no. 106 see this *Bibliography,* II, p. 335, 1; for no. 135 comp. Poznański, *Moses Ibn Chiquitilla,* Leipzig, 1895, p. 197, addition to p. 62; Steinschneider, *AL.,* § 168; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 216, addition to p. 83.

It goes without saying that the collection of Müller and Harkavy contains but a fraction of what is still to be gathered from MSS. and printed works, a task which, as Dr. Freimann of Holleschau, Moravia, has told me, he began some years ago and has probably brought to com-

pletion. I should here note only that Schechter's *Saadyana* contains (aside from the numerous fragments of the Gaon's own works, which have been discussed) numerous *Quotations* by others from unidentified works of Saadia, see nos. xiv, xxiv, xxxi-xxxiv, li. Judah b. Barzillai, *Commentary* on *Sēfer Yeẓirah,* p. 166, quotes a passage from Saadia on a liturgical question. In his ספר השטרות, edited by Halberstam, Berlin, 1898, he quotes Saadia several times; see the editor's Index. Saadia's interpretation of Exodus, 6, 3. is quoted by Solomon Ibn Gabirol, see Berliner's פלטת סופרים, Mayence 1872, p. 28; comp. *ib.,* German part, pp. 28, 30. Various passages, some of which are recorded also by Müller, are quoted in the מחזור ויטרי, ed. Hurwitz, Berlin, 1896-7; see the editor's Introduction, pp. 45-47, and Berliner's additions at the end of the volume (השלמה למחזור ויטרי), p. 815 (separate edition, p. 15); comp. also below, under *Calendar,* no. 2. Gedaliah Ibn Yaḥya, שלשלת הקבלה, ed. Amsterdam, p. 72, top, quotes Saadia's explanation of the value of certain coins mentioned in the Talmud; comp. *Oeuvres,* IX, 146, no. 7; Zunz, *Zur Geschichte,* 542, 548-549; Steinschneider, *MWJ.,* III, 47, 151 (Mosconi); Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 167, n. 1. For the numerous quotations by Moses Tachau see above, pp. 281-285. Saadia is quoted also by an Arabic commentator of the Passover Haggadah; see W. H. Greenburg, *The Haggadah According to the Rite of Yemen,* Leipzig, 1896, p. 32. The quoted passage is found, however, in תנחומא, section פקודי, § 9. For quotations by Jacob b. Asher see above, note 369; see also above, p. 348, end of no. 7.

For a general characterization of Saadia as a Talmudist see Weiss, דור דור ודורשיו, Wilna, 1904, vol. 4, pp. 137-143; Ginzberg, *Geonica,* I, 162-167. Halevy's דורות הראשנים, III, 275 ff. does not serve our purpose.

IV. CALENDAR AND CHRONOLOGY

A. CALENDAR

Excepting incidental discussions of the calendar which occur in all the anti-Ḳaraitic writings of Saadia, his works in this field, so far as they are known, were all occasioned

by his controversy with Ben Meir. Great confusion exists with regard to the identification and chronology of the various documents relating to this controversy. I have therefore treated the subject separately under the title "Documents on the Ben Meir Controversy" which will be found below, pp. 409 ff., as an appendix to chapter IV (see *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 500). As most of the bibliographical details about Saadia's writings on the calendar are given there, I shall deal here only with the few additional works, while for the others reference is made to "Documents."

1. ספר זכרון, see *Documents,* no. 9.

2. ארבעה שערים, "Four Gates." In the Genizah lists published by Bacher, *RÉJ.*, XXXIX, 200, no. 28 (see also no. 41, where a work under the same title appears anonymously) and Schechter, *Saadyana,* no. xlvii, Saadia is explicitly mentioned as the author of a work under this title, as also in a work on the calendar by a later author; comp. Bornstein, מחלקת רב סעדיה, p. 25, n. 2; Poznański, *RÉJ.*, XL, 87 f. For further details regarding the "Four Gates" see above, p. 73, note 151.

Here should be added the סימנים, *i. e.,* mnemotechnical "Signs" summarizing the rules for the four Postponements (דחיות) as laid down in the "Four Gates." They were published by Berliner in his Supplement to the מחזור ויטרי (see above, p. 351), pp. 815-816.

3. ספר המועדים, see *Documents,* no. 10. As to the real title of the work see Malter, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 490, n. 9.

4. Three Letters, see *Documents,* nos. 4, 5, 11; comp. also no. 1.

5. סדר (סוד) העבור, "Order (or, Mysteries) of the Calendar," counted among the works of Saadia by the Muhammedan author Muhammed Ibn Isḥâk al-Nadîm (987) in his *Fihrist al-'Ulûm,* ed. Flügel-Rödiger, I, 320, who calls it *Kitâb al-'Ibbur* and, as *'Ibbur* is a Hebrew word, adds the explanation *wahuwa al-Ta'rîḫ*, "and this means *Ta'rîḫ*," *i. e.* calendar, or chronology. This explanation has led some recent authors to identify the work with the *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ*

which is quoted by Judah Ibn Bal'am (see below under Chronology). Hebrew authors refer to a סוד or סדר העבור of Saadia; see on the whole subject, Rapoport, בכה"ע, ix, 29, n. 23; Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2170 f., and *AL.*, p. 63, no. 26; Poznański, *JOR.*, X, 260 f. An Arabic Genizah fragment of three leaves dealing with the calendar (Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. ix) was thought to be part of the work, but more probably it belongs to the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz;* see this *Bibliography*, p. 380, letter *a*. In the List edited by Bacher, *RÉJ.*, XXXIX, 200, no. 20, a book אלעבור is mentioned, which, as Bacher, *ibidem*, p. 205, no. 3, thinks, refers to this work (*i. e.* the סדר העבור) [comp. also below, p. 427].

B. CHRONOLOGY

1. *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ* (כתאב אלתאריך), "Book of Chronology," published in Neubauer's *MJC.*, ii, 89-110. In the Introduction to the volume, p. xi, Neubauer calls attention to the fact that a passage quoted by the grammarian and exegete Judah Ibn Bal'am (11th century) in the name of Saadia is found literally in the work before us, and that the Arabic translation of geographical names in the Bible agrees mostly with Saadia's translation. Bacher in a thorough review of the work (*RÉJ.*, XXXII, 140-144) pointed out many more Saadianic elements and suggested Saadia's authorship, which was taken into consideration, but not positively affirmed, by Steinschneider, *AL.*, § 146. Subsequently the matter was again taken up by Bacher, *RÉJ.*, XLIX, 298 f., who tried to show that the *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ* had originally formed part (the second chapter) of the Arabic version of the *Sēfer ha-Galui*, but was later detached from the original work and circulated as a separate volume under the new title. In this form alone, Bacher thinks, it was known to Judah Ibn Bal'am. This view, however, is quite improbable, for, to judge from the existing fragments of both the Hebrew and Arabic *Sefer ha-Galui* (see this *Bibliography* below, p. 391, 393, letter *c*), the latter was written in a rhetorical style little in harmony with a dry Biblical chronology like the *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ*. Nor is it probable that an extensive work like this would have formed a chapter of the

Sēfer ha-Galui. Moreover, the latter was essentially a polemic against the Exilarch and other adversaries of the author; and although, as he states in the Introduction (see *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 491), the second chapter of the work contained the discussion of the duration of prophecy in Israel and of the redaction of the Mishnah and the Talmud, that discussion, judging from the existing fragment (see below, p. 391, letter *a*), is of an entirely different nature. Be this as it may, Saadia's authorship of the latter work is now established beyond dispute, for a small Genizah fragment from the *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ,* published by Marx, *RÉJ.,* 1909, p. 299, which contains the beginning of the composition, mentions Saadia explicitly as the author. Moreover, a second fragment of a work on the calendar (written in 1028), published by Marx, *ibidem,* p. 300, likewise quotes the *Kitâb al-Tawâîḫ* (plural of *Ta'rîḫ*) as a work of Saadia; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 344, addition to § 146 (where for S. Fränkel read W. Bacher and for "xl, 182" read xlix, 298) and especially his *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden,* Frankfurt a. M., 1905, p. 19, and § 29*b;* see also Bacher, *MGWJ.,* 1911, pp. 253 f. The List in Schechter's *Saadyana,* no. xxxvii, mentions also a כתאב אלתאריך, though without the name of the author.

2. סדר תנאים ואמוראים, "Chronological Order of the Tannaim and Amoraim," the discovery of which was announced by Harkavy in his חדשים גם ישנים, no 1, published in the periodical מצפה, 1 (1886), 1-12 (see *RÉJ.,* XIV, 119 f). To my knowledge it has never appeared, and some doubt may be entertained as to its identity; see Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 50, no. 10 (where in line 10, 119 should be read for "110," so also in Steinschneider's *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden,* p. 19, l. 14).

3. תולדות רבנו הקדוש, "Genealogy of Rabbi Judah the Holy," redactor of the Mishnah. In a fragment published by Schechter, *Saadyana,* no. 1, p. 135, Saadia reports that while in Mosul he was asked in a letter (במגלת ספר) to set forth R. Judah's genealogy and to explain the relationship between Rab and Ḥiyya (see b. Pesaḥim, 4a), which he did, as it seems, in a letter ([גלה] וישב למו במ); comp. Bornstein, מחלקת רס"ג, p. 72.

4. מגלת בני חשמוני, "The Scroll of the Ḥasmoneans." Much has been written about the time, country, and original language of this Scroll (see in the main Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 205 ff.; Gaster, *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists,* London, 1893, II, 3-32; Neubauer, *JQR.,* VI, 570 ff.; Ginzberg, *JE.,* I, 637; Lévi, *REJ.,* XLV, 171 ff.). It may now be considered certain that it is the work of an author living either in Babylonia (Ginzberg) or in Syria (Lévi) during the seventh or eighth century, and that its original language was Aramaic. Very early it was translated into Arabic, Hebrew, and, later, Persian; while the Hebrew version served as original for translations into Latin, German, and Spanish. Gaster (*l. c.*) again translated the Aramaic into English. We are here concerned only with the Arabic version. It exists in numerous, mostly Yemenite, MSS. None of them bears the name of Saadia as the author. Hirschfeld who published this version, therefore, gives it as an anonymous piece (*Arabic Chrestomathy,* London, 1892, pp. 1-6). Later A. S. Wertheimer published the same version with many different, often mistaken, readings from a Yemen MS. (לקט מדרשים, Jerusalem, 1903), which, he asserts, is 700 years old. He was the first to suggest (p. 10) Saadia as the author [and his view is now borne out by a Genizah fragment recently published by J. Mann, *JQR., N. S.,* XI, 425, which represents a catalogue of Saadia's writings compiled shortly after his death, and in which the מגלת בני חשמוני is mentioned as one of the Gaon's works. From the words . . . וצדר לה following upon the title of the Scroll it appears that he wrote also an introduction to his translation, of which, however, nothing has so far been recovered]. As already noted (above, p. 173), Saadia referred to the Scroll several times in his *Sefer ha-Galui* (Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 150, 162, 180); comp. also Malter, *JQR., N. S.,* III, 489, n. 6; Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 277; *MGWJ.,* XLVII, 365 ff.

V. PHILOSOPHY

1. *Tafsîr Kitâb al-Mabâdî* (תפסיר כתאב אלמבאדי), "Commentary on the Book of Creation," of which only one complete MS. is preserved in the Bodleian Library. Short extracts therefrom were published by Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2220:

by Neubauer, with a French translation, *Journal Asiatique,* 1861, ii, p. 247; 1862, ii, pp. 261-267 (separate edition: *Notice sur la lexicographie hebräique,* Paris, 1863, pp. 7, 215-219). reprinted and translated into Hebrew by Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 61-65 (comp. above, p. 307, no. 2); by Derenbourg, likewise with French translation, *Journal Asiatique,* 1870, pp. 496, 515 f. (separate edition: *Manuel du lecteur,* Paris 1870, pp. 188, 207); comp. Kaufmann's *Notes* on פם"י of Judah b. Barzillai, p. 347, *ad paginam* 229. A complete edition of the Arabic text with a French translation, introduction, and notes was prepared by M. Lambert, *Commentaire sur le Sefer Yesira par le Gaon Saadya,* Paris, 1891 (comp. Steinschneider, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung,* 1892, p. 148; A. Epstein, *MGWJ.,* 1893, pp. 119 f), Arabic characters being substituted by the editor for the Hebrew characters of the MS. The text together with the Hebrew paragraphs of the *Sefer Yezirah* itself, covers 105 pages. Since the appearance of this edition several fragments of the Arabic text, covering about 26 pages of the printed book (viz. 1-11, 10-12, 26-38, 100-102), were found in the *Genizah;* see Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, nos. 2669, 23; 2787, 21; 2850, 7; 2860, 6. There may be more fragments which I have not seen. The portions published by Steinschneider, Neubauer, Harkavy, and Derenbourg are found in Lambert's edition, pp. 13 (ll. 4-7); 24 (ll. 1-5); 42 (l. 7)-43 (l. 12); 76 (l. 2)-78 (bottom); 79, ll. 5-13.

The work was translated into Hebrew by one Moses b. Joseph of Lucena, whose date is not certain, presumably the twelfth century. This translation is extant only in MSS. A short extract was given by Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 3 (ed. Lambert, p. 21, l. 14 to 22, l. 15; comp. M. Sachs in Rosenberg's קובץ, II, 85, n. 2); comp. also *ib.,* pp. 23-25. Several pages were reproduced by Kaufmann in his *Notes* to Halberstam's edition of Judah b. Barzillai's פרוש ספר יצירה (Berlin, 1885), p. 338 (Lambert, p. 19, bottom—20, 17); 339, *ad paginam* 155 (Lambert, p. 15, l. 15—16, 5); 340-342 (Lambert, 69, 7—74, 3). Several shorter passages were reproduced by Jellinek, *Beiträge,* I, 73, note; Epstein, *RÉJ.,* xxi, p. 93, n. 4, and Kaufmann, *Sinne,* p. 134, n. 20; p. 153, n. 16. For a

detailed characterization of this Hebrew translation, see Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Uebersetzungen*, pp. 443-445.

Prior to this translation there must have existed two, perhaps even three, other Hebrew translations, partial or complete. The aforementioned Judah b. Barziliai (1135) reproduces, at the end of his Commentary, pp. 268-278, a considerable portion of an earlier Hebrew translation by an unknown author, which contains the whole Introduction and most of the first paragraph of the first chapter of Saadia's work (Lambert, pp. 1-23, l. 7). To this translation he refers also on p. 184, complaining of its poor, unintelligible Hebrew style. He had, however, as appears from p. 255 (l. 19), two other versions—unless we assume that one of them is identical with that which he had designated as poor. Be that as it may, that translation which Judah considers the most correct, is cited extensively in various parts of his Commentary, the quotations covering nearly thirty pages of the book. Thus the Hebrew translation of about half of Saadia's Commentary is to be found in the Commentary of Judah. A careful comparison of the two texts, the Arabic and the Hebrew, would bring out many an interesting point, especially for the study of the mediæval Hebrew. To facilitate such a comparison I subjoin in parallel columns a table of the corresponding texts in the two Commentaries:

Saadia	*Judah b. Barzillai*
Page 5, line 4—page 6, line 3	page 174, line 4-20
" 31, " 16— " 32, " 9	" 209, " 5-13
" 38, " 14— " 41, " 7	" 162, " 9-163, 17
" 42, " 7— " 46, " 9	" 229, " 30-231, 23
" 46, " 13— " 47, " 17	" 237, " 4-16+34+36-40+page 238, 1 (the rest being inserted by Judah)
" 48, " 3— " 50, " 9	" 254, " 26-255, 19
" 51, " 2— " 54, " 15	" 213, " 16-215, 3
" 55, " 1— " 58, " 5	" 260, " 12-261, 22
" 59, " 3— " 60, " 7	" 221, " 24-222, 13
" 61, " 4— " 63, " 14	" 244, " 14-245, 15
" 69, " 8— " 74, " 3	" 177, " 11-179, 12

Kaufmann in his *Notes* on the Commentary (pp. 238, 347 f., *ad paginam* 229, 7-8 from below) assumes that Judah is himself the translator of some of these passages. He overlooked Judah's clear statement (p. 237) that he did not possess the Arabic original. It is also doubtful whether any of his Hebrew translations was complete, see p. 245, l. 16. However, aside from the passages he quoted, he made extensive use of other portions of Saadia's Commentary, even where he does not mention it; comp. *e. g.* his interpretation of the Divine Names (pp. 126 f.) with that of Saadia, pp. 19 f.; further, the lengthy exposition, p. 240, with the Commentary of Saadia, pp. 59-62; see also Judah, p. 209, bottom, and Saadia, p. 80, with reference to the רל"א שערים; Kaufmann, pp. 339, 345, *ad paginam* 209.

Aside from the translation of Moses of Lucena and those used by Judah b. Barzillai, there was another Hebrew translation from which Moses Tachau, or Tackau (1230, see for details above, pp. 281 ff.), quotes a lengthy passage in his כתב תמים, published by Kirchheim in אוצר נחמד, III (1860), 66. The corresponding Arabic text in ed. Lambert is p. 70, 5-71, last line but one. The same passage in an entirely different version is found in Judah's commentary, pp. 177 f. Another short passage from the same translation of Saadia's Commentary (ed. Lambert, p. 47, 11 ff.) is quoted by Tachau, *ibidem,* p. 67, 10, which is found also in Judah's Commentary, p. 237, 4 from below; comp. Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Uebersetzungen,* p. 444, n. 523.

Finally, there is still another translation to be mentioned, the existence of which has hitherto escaped notice. Berechiah ha-Naḳdan (מצרף, ed. Gollancz, London, 1902) reproduces pp. 118, 5 (from below)—119, 23, the Hebrew translation of a passage from Saadia's Commentary (Lambert, p. 18, 17-20, 4), which does not agree either with that of Moses of Lucena (according to the copy made for Halberstam, which I have compared in the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York), or with that reproduced by Judah b. Barzillai, pp. 275 f. As Berechiah is not supposed to have known Arabic, it would follow that he drew upon some translation which is no

longer extant (see above, note 632). For further details on Berechiah and his connection with the works of Saadia see above, p. 288, and below, pp. 361 f. Another author of the 12th century, the mystic Eleazar of Worms, who also wrote a Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (published in Przemyśl, 1883), drew upon the Commentary of Saadia only indirectly, making use of the Hebrew extracts of Judah b. Barzillai; comp. Epstein, *MGWJ.*, 1893, pp. 117 f.; Halberstam, *MGWJ.*, 1893, p. 247, and the references there given.

The foregoing account shows sufficiently that Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* was very widely used by earlier mediæval authors. In later centuries, as well as in recent times, however, little attention has been given to it.

2. *Kitâb al-'Amânât wa-'l-I'tiḳâdât* (כתאב אלאמאנאת ואלאעתקאדאת), "Book of Philosophic Doctrines and Religious Beliefs."

A. ARABIC TEXT

The Arabic work under the title here given has been preserved in two MSS. only, one of which is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the other in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg. The latter is not quite complete; several pages are missing here and there, while many others have been damaged by fire. Aside from these two MSS. there is a Genizah fragment in the Bodleian Library (see Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, no. 2753), of which I possess a copy. The fragment covers nearly the whole sixth chapter of the work, lacking only 14 lines at the begining and 4 lines at the end (p. 189, l. 4-211, l. 1, of the printed edition, which will be discussed below) and part of the seventh in the edition of Bacher in Steinschneider's *Festschrift* (see below), p. 105, ll. 24-108, l. 10. Another Genizah fragment in the collection of the Cambridge University Library (pp. 116, 15-119, 8 of the printed edition) was published with an English translation by Hirschfeld (*JQR.*, XVII, 721-725), who mistook it for part of another work, but subsequently corrected his mistake (see *JQR.*, XVIII, 146). All the MSS. extant are written in Hebrew characters.

As early as 1717 John Gagnier edited a specimen of the Bodleian MS., then the only one known, side by side with the

corresponding section of the Hebrew translation of Judah Ibn Tibbon (see below) and his own Latin translation. This specimen is so rare that according to Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2172, not even the Bodleian Library possesses a copy. From the same MS. the beginning of chapter VIII (pp. 229-233, 4 from below of the printed edition) was published with a French translation by Salomon Munk, *Notice sur R. Saadia Gaon,* Paris, 1858, pp. 20-29.

The entire work, transliterated into Arabic characters, was critically edited on the basis of the Bodleian MS. by S. Landauer (Leyden, 1880). The editor also made careful use of the St. Petersburg MS., giving in footnotes all its important variants and sometimes, though not in an adequate measure, incorporating them into the text instead of the readings offered by the Bodleian MS. A minute review of this edition was published by Goldziher in *ZDMG.*, XXXV (1881), 773-783.

Pages 125, 4 from below—128, 2 of Landauer's edition were reprinted (in Hebrew characters) by Hirschfeld in his *Arabic Chrestomathy,* London, 1892, pp. 35 f.

As was stated above, p. 194, Saadia wrote the seventh chapter of his work, dealing with the question of resurrection, in two entirely different recensions. One of these recensions, probably the older one, is found only in the Bodleian MS. while the other is represented in the St. Petersburg MS. Landauer's edition contains only the first, usually designated as the Oxford Recension; the recension of the St. Petersburg MS. was edited in 1886 by Bacher, in the Steinschneider *Festschrift,* Hebrew part, pp. 98-112. Two passages of considerable length, at the beginning and toward the end of the chapter, which are missing in the MS., were reproduced by Bacher on the basis of Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew translation. Saadia's authorship of this so-called St. Petersburg Recension, which was denied by Landauer in his Introduction to the *Kitâb al-Amânât,* pp. x-xi, is proved beyond doubt by Bacher, *ibidem,* German part, pp. 219-226. Recently another fragment of this different recension of the seventh chapter has been found among the MSS. of the Genizah, for which see Neubauer and Cowler, *Catalogue,* II, no. 2642, 11*a*.

B. TRANSLATIONS

a) *Hebrew*

I. THE ANONYMOUS PARAPHRASE

The first attempt at rendering the *Kitâb al-'Amânât* into Hebrew was made by an anonymous author as to whose identity, time, and country much has been written. I am here not concerned with the details of this investigation, and shall merely state the facts. The work, entitled פתרון ספר האמונות, exists in several MSS. in various European libraries. One of the MSS. (Vatican, no. 269) has at the end the date 1095, which is probably that of the translator, not of the copyist (see above, p. 289). The contention of Dukes, *Beiträge*, II, 16, that the date is to be corrected to 1195, is entirely unwarranted. The translation, or, as it is usually and correctly designated, the "Paraphrase," is certainly older than the translation of Judah Ibn Tibbon (1186), and its author, I believe, was one of the Palestinian (Porges, *ZfhB.*, VII, 38: *Babylonian*) Payyeṭānim who flourished in the 11th century. The work is written in the most peculiar style, having no parallel in the entire Hebrew philosophic literature of the Middle Ages. The author is indefatigable in coining new and strange words and phrases to express philosophic ideas in the liturgical language of Eleazar Ḳalir! For textual criticism this work is of little use, as it never keeps to the original, but merely paraphrases its content. From a general linguistic point of view, however, it is of great interest. For a detailed characterization of this Paraphrase see Steinschneider, *HB.*, XIII, 82; *Die hebräischen Uebersetzungen*, pp. 440-443. For extracts from the MSS. that have occasionally been published by various scholars see the references *ibidem*, p. 440, n. 498, to which should be added several passages in Guttmann's *Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia*, pp. 264, 266, 268, 270, 273, 276-279, 281, 283.

About three-quarters of a century after the appearance of the Paraphrase, Berechiah ha-Naḳdan, the well-known author of Hebrew fables, set himself to the task of epitomising it, making additions to it from the works of other authors (Abraham Ibn Ezra, Abraham Ibn Daud, Solomon

Ibn Gabirol, Baḥya Ibn Baḳūda, Abraham b. Ḥiyya). His work has no special title. The same author compiled another work in fifteen chapters under the title ספר המצרף. Of this work chapter I is taken partly from the Paraphrase and partly from a translation of Saadia's Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* (see above, p. 358), while the last six chapters (X-XV), with the exception of a few insertions from other sources (as in chapter XI), are again taken entirely from the Paraphrase. Both compilations were published with an English introduction and translation by H. Gollancz under the title *The Ethical Treatises of Berachya,* London, 1902. This is not the place to discuss the merits or demerits of Gollancz's edition. I must say, however, that it in no way deserves the praise bestowed upon it by N. Porges, in *ZfhB.,* VII, 36-44. Much more reasonable is the review of Guttmann, *MGWJ.,* XLVI, 536-547; comp. also Israel Lévi, *RÉJ.,* XLVI, 285-288, and Steinschneider, *JQR.,* XVII, 581, top.

Much uncertainty prevails regarding the original text used by the anonymous paraphrast. It was noted above that the recension of the seventh chapter in the Oxford MS. differs entirely from that in the St. Petersburg MS. The Paraphrase follows partly the one and partly the other recension (see Landauer, Introduction to the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* p. xi) and the epitomizer Berechiah naturally adheres to the same order. The question is now whether the anonymous paraphrast had both recensions before him and tried to combine them into one, or whether he had an Arabic text in which the two recensions had already beeen fused by some unknown editor. The question may here be left undecided. It is of more importance to note that the anonymous Paraphrase was the source not only of Berechiah, but of several other authors, who embodied parts thereof in their own works, or published them as separate books. These may be arranged as follows, according to the order of the chapters of the *Kitâb al-'Amânât* in which the excerpted materials occur:

1. ספר התשובה של רבנו סעדיה. Under this heading a por-

tion of Chapter V is reproduced by Judah he-Ḥasid (died 1217) in his ספר חסידים, Bologna, 1538, § 612-613; Berlin, 1891, § 36 (the texts in the two editions show many variations). The fifth chapter of Saadia's work must have circulated as a separate treatise under the above title before the time of Judah, who made extracts from it. A comparison of the text of the ספר חסידים with the corresponding passages in Berechiah's work (pp. 33, 38) shows convincingly that the translation is that of the Paraphrase and, so far as this extract is concerned, there is no ground for the assumption of H. Michael, אור החיים, p. 300 (see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 66, n. 18) that there existed a *third* translation of Saadia's work. Judah does not reproduce the text in its original order. Thus the greater part of one paragraph (ed. Berlin, p. 38, top, to וגם יש רשע, third line from below) corresponds to *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* pp. 180, 2-181, 5 from below (in Ibn Tibbon's translation, ed. Slucki, pp. 90, 21-91, 15; Berechiah, pp. 38 f.), while the end of the same paragraph corresponds to pp. 171, 14-172, 2 (Ibn Tibbon, pp. 86, 2 from below—87, 6; Berechiah, p. 33). Possibly Judah is not responsible for these changes, but gave the text as he found it in the separate ספר התשובה, which may have been a free recast of the fifth chapter, based on the Paraphrase. Eleazar of Worms used the same source, perhaps also Juda Ḥalâz; see note 491. The title מאמרים מספר התשובה, quoted by Steinschneider (*CB.*, 2178) and others, is based on a misunderstanding of Rapoport's words in בכורי העתים, IX, 30, bottom.

2. ספר התחיה והפרות, a condensed edition of chapter VII of Saadia's work as contained in the Paraphrase, but with considerable changes, transpositions, and amplifications by an anonymous author, published for the first time at Mantua, 1556, then with an addition from a work of Moses de Trani (see below), Wilna, 1799 (in *Literaturblatt des Orients,* 1847, p. 177, mistakenly identified with the work given below as no. 4), reprinted Sudzilkow, 1834; Warsaw, 1841. The exact title is ספר התחיה, but והפרות was added, because the publication was intended to cover also no. 4 (below, p. 367)

which, however, was published separately two months later; see Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2179.

3. תשובות שאלות לרבנו סעדיה גאון, an anonymous compilation in the style of the Paraphrase, containing the *Ten Questions* regarding resurrection which form the last portion of chapter VII of the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* printed first at the end of מדרש שמואל, Constantinople, 1522 (see Buber's Introduction to his edition of this work, Cracow, 1893, p. 36). The same recension of the Ten Questions, taken from a Parma MS., showing numerous, though not essential variants, was edited under the title עשרה שאלות by Chaim M. Horowitz, בית נכות ההלכות, I, Frankfurt a. M., 1881, pp. 59-62. It will be remembered that the seventh chapter of the Paraphrase, and hence also of the compendium of Berechiah, is a combination of both Arabic recensions (see above, p. 362). Now we find that the number and order of the *Questions* in the *Paraphrase* is exactly the same as in the St. Petersburg MS., which agrees throughout with the recension presented in the translation of Ibn Tibbon, while the content and wording of the individual Questions and answers agree fully with the recension of the St. Petersburg MS. The same is true of the separate editions of the Ten Questions, except that the text is here very much abridged, rendering the comparison somewhat difficult. The only compilation in which the order as well as the number of the Questions is entirely different from that of both Arabic recensions is the ספר התחיה (above, no. 2), whose author, though drawing upon the Paraphrase, perhaps through intermediary sources, has disposed of the material in an altogether arbitrary manner. The style and diction of all these compilations, however, is entirely similar and their common source is the Paraphrase; comp. *e. g.* ספר התחיה, Question 7, and עשרה שאלות, ed. Horowitz, Question 3; see also Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia,* p. 227, n. 5 (for "siebente" read there (fourth line from below) *sechste.* Bacher's assertion (Steinschneider's *Festschrift,* p. 223, n. 1) that the Ten Questions, ed. Horowitz, agree with the recension of the St. Petersburg MS., is therefore correct only in so

far as the order is concerned; in style and content the compiler follows the Paraphrase or some of its later epitomizers, but not the translation of Ibn Tibbon. It should be noted that in ed. Horowitz and in מדרש שמואל the text begins with the words אמר סעדיה שאלוני תלמידי, as if the Questions were addressed to him by his pupils, which is of course an invention of the compiler.

The Paraphrase was also the source of the French Tōsafist Samson b. Abraham of Sens (12th century), who quotes two of the Questions (6, 7) in one of his epistles to Meir b. Ṭodros ha-Levi Abulafia (כתאב אלרסאיל, edited by Jehiel Brill; Paris, 1871, pp. 136 f.). Apart from a few insignificant variants the text agrees literally with that of Berechiah, p. 60. The editor, Brill, evidently did not know of the existence of the Paraphrase, and is therefore surprised at the differences between his text and that of Ibn Tibbon. Samson calls the Questions תשובות רבנו סעדיה, and says that he asked one of the scholars (חברים) to *copy* (להעתיק, see Zunz, *Gesammelte Schriften,* III, 65 f.) them for him. The text of Question 6 (Landauer, pp. 223, 5-19, and 224, 11-18) is corrupt both here and in the work of Berechiah. Gollancz in his edition of the latter, p. 119, translates blindly without noticing the difficulty; comp. the corresponding passage in ספר התחיה, Question 5, which offers here a more correct text. For יאכלו (Brill, p. 137, 4) read יובלו, as in Berechiah, p. 60; comp. also Steinschneider, *CB., 2224,* bottom.

An altogether different recension of the Ten Questions is that published from a Leipzig MS. by Jellinek in his *Bet ha-Midrasch,* VI, 148 f., under the title שאלות רבי אליעזר. The text here is much shorter than in any of the compilations previously mentioned. Its anonymous author does not follow, so far as the wording of the text is concerned, any of the Hebrew versions known, but merely gives the gist of the Questions and the answers in his own language. The order of the Questions is the same as in all other sources, except the ספר התחיה. The "R. Eliezer," to whom the work is here falsely attributed, represents, according to Delitzsch and Jellinek (see the latter's introductory remarks, p. xxxv,

and Steinschneider, *AL.*, pp. 53 f.) either Eliezer b. Hyrcanos or b. Jacob, both teachers of the Mishnah of the first century. For the various MSS. in which the different recensions of the Ten Questions are found (sometimes anonymously and sometimes attributed to one of various mediaeval authors) see Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2178, no. 6, and *AL.*, p. 53.

To dispose of all the material in connection with this subject I add here an account of some other complete or partial editions of the Ten Questions, though the texts of these editions are in no wise based upon that of the Paraphrase. Thus, in a lengthy Responsum of the Gaon Hai (in the Hebrew periodical, כוכבי יצחק, V, 75, published more completely in the collection טעם זקנים by Eliezer Ashkenazi, Frankfurt a/M., 1854, pp. 59*a*-61*a*, who, however, omitted the entire passage with which we are here concerned), the contents of which is based entirely on chs. VII and VIII of the *'Amânât*, the author gives, in the name of Saadia, the contents of Questions 6, 7, 5 (this is his order); comp. Bacher, Steinschneider's *Festschrift*, p. 225, n. 1; above, notes 578, 614. It should be noted that the passage corresponding to Question 7 contains elements which are not found in either of the two Arabic recensions, and agrees almost verbally with the recension in מדרש שמואל and in the edition of Horowitz. It thus appears that Hai's Responsum or a derivate of it was used by the Editor of the recension in question.

Moses de Trani (1505-1585) incorporated the Ten Questions into his ethico-ritualistic work בית אלהים (Venice, 1576; Warsaw, 1872), part III, ch. 59. His text is that of Ibn Tibbon. To each Question he adds a sort of commentary, which in some instances is of very considerable proportions. The extensive commentary on Question 3 was printed also in the later editions of the ספר התחיה. This led an uninformed writer in the *JE.*, XII, 219, to make Moses the author of the latter work, which he characterizes as a "commentary and notes on ch. 7 and 8 of Saadia Gaon's Emūnōt we-Dēōt."

The edition of the Ten Questions by M. L. Bisliches at the end of his edition of Shem Ṭob Palquera's ספר הנפש,

Lemberg, 1835, is unveracious. The text is copied from Ben-Seëb's edition of Ibn Tibbon's translation of the *'Amânât,* but Bisliches introduces the Questions as "addressed to the Gaon by his pupils" (an imitation of the edition in מדרש שמואל; see above, p. 364) and pretends to have drawn upon a MS. To Question 3 he adds a commentary under the name חקר דעת which is that of Ben-Seëb, whose name he suppresses. The "note" (הגה"ה) at the very end is also copied from the edition in מדרש שמואל, end, which is found also with some variations toward the end of the ספר התחיה, but is not in any of the Arabic recensions.

4. ספר הפדות והפורקן, containing about two thirds of ch. VIII of the *'Amânât* (Landauer, pp. 229-245, line 8; Ibn Tibbon, ed. Slucki, pp. 118-125, line 18) in the translation (Paraphrase) of the anonymous author (Berechiah, pp. 62-69, line 11, with variations). It appeared first in Mantua, 1556 (as a continuation of the ספר התחיה, which appeared but two months earlier) and has since been frequently reprinted. It is reproduced with a German translation in the work שלשה שושנים of the apostate Joh. Salomon of Posen (Danzig, 1675), who subsequently wrote a special book in refutation of Saadia's views regarding the expected redemption of Israel ("Zerteilte Finsterniss, oder Widerlegung des Buches Fajjumi's von der Erlösung und befreiung Israels," Danzig, 1681). The ספר הפדות was edited also by Jacob Emden, who wrote a short introduction to it (Altona, 1769). For other editions see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2180; Benjacob, *Thesaurus,* p. 456, no. 20.

It would lead us too far to treat here in detail of the many authors who, down to the 14th century, assiduously studied the *Kitâb al-Amânât* in the Hebrew text of the Paraphrase instead of the more accurate and scientific translation of Judah Ibn Tibbon, and embodied lengthy excerpts therefrom in their works in various fields of learning. The names of these authors and their works, which for the most part exist in MSS. only, have been pointed out by Zunz in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* X, 4-10 (*Gesammelte Schriften,* III, 231 ff.) and many more could now be added (comp. Stein-

schneider, *MWJ.*, III, 151: Judah Mosconi; above, note 493: Judah Ḫalâẓ). Such an enumeration is not within the scope of the present Bibliography. I shall mention only a few authors from whose works lengthy passages, taken from the Paraphrase, have been occasionally published. Thus several pages of the Paraphrase were published by Isidore Loeb, *RÉJ.*, XVIII, 46-52, from the work מלחמות ה', a polemic against Christianity by Jacob b. Reuben (1170). Some of the citations are embodied in chapter XII of the מלחמות, which was published in part by Natan Amram, Amsterdam, 1842, reprinted at Stettin, 1860; comp. Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2032; HB., III, 44. Jacob b. Reuben's work contains many more extensive quotations of Saadia's *Kitâb al-'Amânât* in the text of the Paraphrase (see Loeb, *ib.*, p. 48), which a future editor of the latter will have to consider. The publication of the whole work on the basis of three MSS. was begun by the late Dr. Adolf Posnanski, but was interrupted by the untimely death of the author, so that only the first three chapters (80 pages) were printed (Warsaw, 1912), but not yet published.

In the controversy between Aaron b. Meshullam and the aforementioned Meir ha-Levi Abulafia (see above, p. 365) regarding certain views of Maimonides, especially those on resurrection, both men, very well-known Talmudists of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, refer often to Saadia's opinion upon the question at issue. Their source was again the paraphrase, from which one passage is quoted directly (כתאב אלרסאיל, p. 57; comp. *ib.*, pp. 14, 36).

Numerous passages from Saadia's work under consideration were quoted from the Paraphrase also by Moses Tachau (1230) in his fragmentary כתב תמים, published by Kirchheim in the אוצר נחמד, III, 58-99; comp. above, pp. 281 ff., and Zunz, in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, X, 4-10. To the parallels from the שיר היחוד given there by Zunz several more could be added; comp. *Emūnōt*, ed. Slucki, p. 43, with the end of that poem for the Fifth Day: המדעים בעשר כלולים, ושבע כמיות וששת נדות (תנועות: Ibn Tibbon) ושלש גזרות ועתות ומדות.

Hirschfeld, in his *Descriptive Catalogue of Hebrew MSS. of the Montefiore Library*, no. 483, 9, records "Contents of Saadyāh's ספר האמונות, copied from a MS. written 1540 by a certain Isaac," without indicating whether they were taken from the Paraphrase or from the translation of Ibn Tibbon. They are probably taken from the latter.

In more recent times a few extracts from the Paraphrase have been published by different scholars; see the references above, p. 361. The beginning of chapter VI appeared in the periodical ציון, I. 79. An extract from chapter X (Landauer, p. 117; *'Emūnōt*, ed. Slucki, Leipzig, 1864, p. 160; Berechiah, pp. 98 f.), dealing with music, was published by Steinschneider together with two other pieces on the same subject, under the title לקוטים מחכמת המוסיקא (אוצר הספרות, I. pp. xxix ff.). The same passage was given there by Steinschneider in another version taken from an unpublished commentary on the *Kuzari* of Judah Halevi, called בית יעקב, by Jacob b. Ḥayyim Ferussol (1422); see Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, p. 404; *Renan, Écrivains*, p. 409. Jacob b. Ḥayyim gives as his source the work מגלת המגלה of Abraham b. Ḥiyya (about 1130), which is likewise extant in MSS. only (see Guttmann, *MGWJ.*, XLVI 446-468; XLVII, 545-569), but Steinschneider (*HB.*, XIII, 36) called attention to the fact that the whole passage is only a verbal translation, probably by Abraham b. Ḥiyya himself, of the Arabic text in Saadia's *Kitâb al-'Amânât*. Aside from some variations in terminology this translation agrees fully with that of Ibn Tibbon. We thus possess three different recensions of Saadia's theory of music, which has not yet been properly explained; comp. Steinschneider, *JQR.*, XVII, 559 f., 561, no. 16, and above, note 543. According to Steinschneider, HB., XIII, 36, the passage is found in the MSS. of two other commentaries on the *Kuzari*, namely those of Menahem b. Judah and Nethanel Caspi (both, like Jacob b. Ḥayyim, pupils of Frat Maimon and writing in the year 1422), who also quote it from Abraham b. Ḥiyya; comp. Steinschneider, *Alfarabi*, St. Petersburg, 1869, p. 79, n. 16.

II. THE TRANSLATION OF JUDAH IBN TIBBON

Though, as we have seen, the Paraphrase was more extensively used by mediæval authors than has been hitherto admitted (Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 441, n. 502), yet it was Judah Ibn Tibbon's translation through which Saadia was studied by all non-Arabic speaking Jewry from the Middle Ages to our time. Judah translated the work in Lunel, Southern France, in the year 1186, under the title ספר האמונות והדעות. So far no critical edition of this standard work has been made. The following is a brief enumeration and description of the various editions:

1. Constantinople, 1562, in 4to, in the so-called Rashi script. In a colophon the dates of the composition (933) and of the translation (1186) are given.

2. Amsterdam, 1647, 4to, a poor reprint of the Constantinople edition, to which an index of the subject matter was added, covering 6 pages. For a characterization of this edition see Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia,* p. 27, n. 1.

3. Berlin, 1789, 4to, with a double commentary חקר דעת and שומר אמונה by Judah Loeb Ben-Seëb. The text of this edition, which is a reprint of the preceding ones, is full of arbitrary, uncritical changes and of typographical errors. A new feature of this edition is the division of the text into comparatively short paragraphs to facilitate quotation. The division, too, is often quite arbitrary and unscientific, but in the absence of a better one, writers on Saadia often quote according to the paragraphs of this edition. The commentaries contain many a valuable and learned remark.

4. Leipzig, 1859, 8vo, by Fischl Hirsch, who made use also of the *editio princeps,* Guttmann's contention to the contrary notwithstanding (*l. c.*) ; see *e. g.* p. 118, where the reading מנופפים is found only in the first edition, while the other editions have incorrectly מנפחים. The heading of ch. VII (p. 132) likewise rests on the Constantinople edition, as it was omitted in those of Amsterdam and Berlin. On p. 23 there is an explanatory note in German by Jellinek (the only one, not "several," as Steinschneider, *Hebräische*

Uebersetzungen, p. 439, has it). This edition has the merit of giving the references to the Biblical books for the numerous verses quoted in the work. Unfortunately, however, the references are often incorrect.

5. Leipzig, 1864, small 8vo, by D. Slucki with an introduction containing a sketch of Saadia's life and works (compiled from Rapoport, Fürst, Graetz, and others) and explanatory notes on the text, mostly taken from Ben-Seëb and Fürst. They have no scientific value. The editor's notes extend only to p. 87 (beginning of ch. V) and are then continued by I. Dines; see the latter's remark on the last page of the book.

6. Cracow, 1880, 8vo, a reprint of No. 5 with the omission of the Introduction and the suppression of the names of the two annotators. In this edition numberless misprints are added to those of the earlier editions.

7. Jósefów, 1885, 8vo, by Israel ha-Levi with a commentary, שביל האמונה. This is the only edition that appeared after the publication of the Arabic original, but the editor, a Russian Rabbi of the old school and neither in touch nor in sympathy with modern research, is not at all aware of the existence of an Arabic original. Nor does he take cognizance of anything that was written on the subject by Jewish scholars for the last hundred years, though he knows of the existence of such writings, as is obvious from his polemics against Slucki (see his Introduction, p. 7). His appreciation of Saadia rests wholly on what he gathers from mediæval sources, to which he refers in the Introduction. As he here informs us, he made use of four previous editions, of which he mentions explicitly the *editio princeps* and that of Slucki (the other two are probably those of Amsterdam and Berlin). His text, which he, too, divided into short paragraphs is on the whole more correct than that of the other editions. In several passages, however, which contain Saadia's polemic against Christianity (pp. 92, 183 f.), it was mutilated by the Russian censor. His references to Bible and Talmud are likewise correct; his commentary, written in a lucid style, shows remarkable insight and keen penetration into the real meaning of the difficult text, and his sug-

gestions as to eventual emendations are often supported by the original. It goes without saying that due to the corruptions in the text and to other reasons he at times falls into misinterpretations, but on the whole he understood Saadia better than all previous commentators (Fürst not excluded). Considering the nature of the author's resources, as well as the public for which he wrote, his commentary must be recognized as a highly creditable production. The work is preceded by a dictionary of philosophic terms in mediæval Hebrew literature (published also separately under the title באר ישראל, Jósefów, 1886). Most of the terms are fairly well explained, while the explanation of a few others (as חלק, מדברים, תכלית בשלוח) shows the author's naïveté.

A critical edition based on all the existing MSS. and on a careful comparison of the Arabic recensions, including the Genizah fragments, has been prepared by the present writer and will be published soon after the present work.

Ever since the Arabic original was made accessible, first through copies from the MSS. and later through Landauer's edition, various scholars have repeatedly furnished notes and emendations to Ibn Tibbon's text, which are scattered in several periodicals and other publications. They are of considerable value and should therefore not be omitted from this Bibliography:

L. Loewe, in the Hebrew weekly המגיד, 1867, p. 37.

M. Wolff, *ZDMG.*, XXXII (1878), 694-707, continued in *MWJ.*, VII (1880), 73-100, VIII, 60 (to the whole work with the exception of chapter VII).

D. Kaufmann, *ZDMG.*, XXXVII (1883), 230-149 (to the Introduction only, for which he compared also MSS. of the Paraphrase; comp. also his article in Rahmer's *Jüdisches Literaturblatt,* 1878, p. 65).

S. H. Margulies, *MWJ.*, XV (1888), 123-133; 160-169; XVII (1890), 280-288; Kaufmann's *Gedenkbuch,* Breslau 1900, pp. 210-220 (covering altogether the Introduction and the first six chapters). It is rather strange that in his introductory remarks to the article in Kaufmann's *Gedenkbuch*

the author states that the latter is a continuation of two previous articles which he had published in *MWJ.*, XV, but omits the reference to his third article in *MWJ.*, XVII, from which about a third of the notes are here repeated.

W. Bacher, Kaufmann's *Gedenkbuch,* pp. 188-207 (to the whole book), followed by a specimen of his intended edition of the whole text (taken from ch. 1, ed. Slucki, pp. 21 f.).

I. Goldziher, *REJ.*, LX (1910), 32 f.

Aside from these separate articles on the subject numerous emendations of Ibn Tibbon's text were occasionally suggested by Bloch, Guttmann, Bacher, and Horovitz, in the works to be mentioned below.

For completeness' sake I mention here the work פתוחי חותם by the well-known Russian-Hebrew writer Isaac Baer Levinsohn, which was written in 1845, but published for the first time by his nephew B. Nathansohn, Warsaw, 1903 (see the latter's biography of Levinsohn under the title ספר הזכרונות, Warsaw, 1899, p. 156, n. 2). The work consists of seven literary pieces, the sixth of which (pp. 54-77) is an abridged and, as the author thought, emended edition of Ibn Tibbon's text of Saadia's Introduction, with a profuse commentary in which the author tries to justify his arbitrary changes. As he had no other sources than the corrupt Berlin edition, his emendations are mere guesswork and of no critical value. So far as I know no reference is found anywhere to this curious attempt of the so-called "Russian Mendelssohn."

b) *Latin*

1. Joh. Gagnier, *Specimen novae editionis libri* האמונות והדעות etc. Oxford, 1717, for which see Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica,* I, 268; Steinschneider, *Christliche Hebraisten,* in *ZfhB.*, III, 13; comp. above, p. 360.

2. Theodor Dassov, *Diatribe qua Judaeos de resurrectione mortuorum sententia erasse explicatur* etc., Wittenberg, 1675, containing the translation of most of the seventh chapter; see Fürst, *l. c.*, I, 197, 268. As regards the author see Steinschneider, *l. c.*, II, 124.

c) *German*

1. J. Salomon, translation of ch. VIII, see above, p. 367, no. 4.

2. Julius Fürst, *Emunot we-Deot, oder Glaubenslehre und Philosophie von Saadja Fajjumi,* Leipzig, 1845. This translation or rather paraphrase of the whole work of Ibn Tibbon with the exception of chapter X (ethics) has been justly designated as entirely inadequate, or as Steinschneider (*Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 439) puts it, "not worth the trouble that scholars have taken in trying to correct some of its mistakes." Fürst is not to be blamed too much for these mistakes, for nobody could have correctly translated Ibn Tibbon's text without the aid of the Arabic original. It would have been better, however, not to have published a work of which a considerable part had to be based on vague conjectures.

3. Philipp Bloch, *Vom Glauben und Wissen, München,* 1879, containing the translation of the Introduction and of the first chapter (reprint from Rahmer's *Jüdisches Literaturblatt*). Bloch made use also of a MS. of the anonymous Paraphrase, and his translation, so far as it goes, is incomparably superior to that of Fürst. But as the original was at that time inaccessible in print, he likewise often misunderstood the text. While it was in the course of publication M. Wolff's notes and emendations of the Hebrew text, based on a comparison of a MS. of the Arabic original (see above, p. 372), appeared, following which Bloch appended additions to his work, wherein most of the mistakes were corrected; comp. also Bloch's article, *MGWJ.,* 1870, pp. 401-414, 449-456.

4. A. Kaminka, *Die Litteratur der geonäischen Zeit,* in Winter and Wünsche's *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II (1897), 31-39, translated part of the Introduction (Landauer, pp. 1-5, l. 12; Hebrew text ed. Cracow, 1880, pp. 1-4, l. 7) and nearly half of the sixth chapter (Landauer, pp. 188-198, l. 6; Hebrew text, pp. 127-132, l. 18).

5. Wilhelm Engelkemper, *Die religionsphilosophische Lehre Saadja Gaons über die Heilige Schrift,* Münster, 1903,

containing the translation of chapter III with a general Introduction and copious notes. The author, who had previously published a learned biography of Saadia in Latin (see above, note 191), translates from the Arabic original with the aid of the Hebrew text of Ibn Tibbon, and on the whole acquits himself creditably; but not being sufficiently familiar with the ideas and sources of mediæval Jewish theology, which is the essential content of this chapter, he often misunderstands and misinterprets both texts. The Introduction, too, contains a number of misstatements, as for instance that Israëli's treatise (see Steinschneider's *Festschrift,* pp. 131 ff.; *JQR.,* XV, 689 ff.) exists only in Latin (p. 2, n. 2), that ch. V of the *Emūnōt* appeared in the ספר חסידים (p. 6, n. 2), while in fact only about one page is there reproduced (see above, p. 362, no. 1); comp. the reviews of Guttmann, *Theologische Literaturzeitung,* 1904, no. 2; Seybold, *Orientalistische Litteratur-Zeitung,* VII, 255. Chapter VIII was partly translated into French by Michel A. Weill, *L'Univers Israélite,* 1870, pp. 271 ff. For translations of other part into French (Munk) and English (Hirschfeld) see above, pp. 359 f.

In this connection it should also be recorded that in 1840 Steinschneider, in collaboration with Julius Barrasch, prepared a translation of and a commentary on the *Emunot,* but, as he explicitly states in his *CB.,* 2175, postponed publication until a more reliable Hebrew text should be available. This translation and commentary are now in my possession; the author, who, I am proud to say, was my beloved teacher and friend, having placed them at my disposal. The unequalled position of Steinschneider in the field of Jewish literature warrants a short description of his unpublished work. The MS., covering 578 pages in quarto, contains the translation of the whole text with the exception of ch. X. The Introduction (of Saadia) and the first four chapters (pp. 1-256) are translated by Julius Barrasch, a distinguished physician and writer who died at Bucharest in 1863. It is interesting to note that the first twenty pages are written in Judæo-German, the rest in German script. The margin

shows numerous corrections by Steinschneider. Barrasch began the translation in Prague, "Friday, 24th of January, 1840" and finished it "Sunday the 17th of July" in the same year. The remaining five chapters are translated by Steinschneider. In the course of time he made various changes in the MS. so that the deciphering is sometimes difficult. On the margin are numerous notes, partly in Judæo-German script by Barrasch, but mostly from the hand of Steinschneider. At the end of the volume is a complete index of the Biblical and Talmudic passages of the *Emunot,* but unfortunately the pagination refers to the edition of Ben-Seëb which to-day is worthless. I hope to prepare the whole work for publication.

The "Commentary" to which Steinschneider referred is a separate little volume of 70 pages. It does not really explain Ibn Tibbon's text, but is more in the form of a glossary, elucidating the peculiar words and phrases of the translator by references to analogous passages in the works of the same writer and in other philosophic treatises. The terminological material collected in this little volume by thousands of references is almost inexhaustible. Part of it was utilized by Delitzsch in his edition of the עץ חיים by the Karaite Aaron b. Elijah (Leipzig, 1841; comp. Delitzsch's Introduction to the edition, p. 14), and later by Steinschneider himself in his numerous writings, but much of it can only be used in connection with a critical edition of Ibn Tibbon's text.

In conclusion mention should be made of two MSS. commentaries on the *'Emūnōt* by mediæval authors (cod. De Rossi, nos. 769, 1283), for which see Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2175, no. 4.

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S. Munk, *Mélanges de philosophie juive et arabe,* Paris, 1859, pp. 477 ff.

* General works, monographs, essays, etc., in which characterizations of Saadia's philosophy, or of some particular branch thereof are to be found (in chronological order).

H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden,* V, fourth edition by S. Eppenstein, Leipzig, 1909, pp. 296-312; Hebrew translation by S. P. Rabbinowicz with notes by Harkavy, vol. III, Warsaw, 1893, pp. 292-306. In the English translation (Philadelphia, 1894), vol. III, pp. 197 f., this most important part of Saadia's scientific work was unwisely omitted.

A. Schmiedl, *Saadia Alfajûmi und die negativen Vorzüge seiner Religionsphilosophie,* Vienna, 1870.

M. Eisler, *Vorlesungen über die jüdischen Philosophen des Mittelalters,* Vienna, 1876, pp. 1-43 (with an appendix, containing Hebrew extracts from the *Emūnōt*), a very valuable summary of Saadia's philosophy, though in some parts antiquated.

D. Kaufmann, *Geschichte der Attributenlehre,* Gotha, 1877, pp. 1-77 (with an appendix entitled *Der schriftstellerische Charakter des "Emunoth,"* pp. 78-90), a very important study; comp. Brüll, *Jahrbücher,* IV, 134-156; see also Kaufmann, *Die Sinne,* Leipzig, 1884, index, *s. v.* Saadia.

M. Joel, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie,* II, Breslau, 1878, *Anhang,* pp. 34-44 (reprint from Wertheimer's *Jahrbuch für Israeliten,* 5626, Vienna, 1866).

Jacob Guttmann, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia,* Göttingen, 1882, the best work on Saadia's philosophy. Following the order of the Hebrew text the author gives an excellent translation of the most essential parts of the work elucidating each of the translated portions by general discussions and by quoting numerous parallel passages from Greek and Arabic writers, thus presenting the content of the whole as a fairly complete system. The work is preceded by a well-written general Introduction (p. 1-32); comp. Steinschneider, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung,* 1883, p. 77; see also Guttmann, *Die Beziehungen der maimonidischen Religions-philosophie zu der des Saadia,* in Israel Lewy's *Festschrift,* Breslau, 1911, pp. 308-326, also in *Moses b. Maimon,* II (Leipzig, 1914), 201-216.

M. Wolff, *Ein Wort über Religion und Philosophie nach Auffassung Saadjâ al-Fajjûmî's, ZDMG.,* XLIV (1890), 154-164.

W. Bacher, *Die Bibelexegese der jüdischen Religionsphilosophen des Mittelalters vor Maimuni,* Strassburg, 1892, pp. 1-44, dealing exhaustively with Saadia's *philosophic* Bible exegesis, particularly in the *Kitâb al-'Amânât.*

M. Schreiner, *Der Kalâm in der jüdischen Literatur* (printed in the *Dreizehnter Bericht über die Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums in Berlin*), Berlin, 1895, pp. 5-22. The author quotes extensively from the works of Muhammedan writers, showing in particular Saadia's relation to the philosophy of the Mutakallimûn.

G. H[enkel], *Religiozno-Filosofskoe Sochinenie Saadii Gaona, Voskhod,* 1895, II, 3-20; III, 51-62; IV, 3-20; VI, 3-31. See also above, note 191.

S. Bernfeld, דעת אלהים, Warsaw, 1897, pp. 113-139; see also above, note 191.

Ph. Bloch, *Die jüdische Religionsphilosophie* (reprint from Winter and Wünsche, *Die jüdische Litteratur,* II (1897), 704-715).

J. P. Muller, *De Godsleer der Middleeuwsche Joden,* Groningen, 1898, pp. 59-89.

S. Horovitz, *Die Psychologie bei den jüdischen Religionsphilosophen des Mittelalters von Saadia bis Maimuni* (in the "*Jahres-Bericht*" of the Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau), Breslau, 1898, part I, pp. 1-75, a learned work with copious notes, in which numerous Greek sources are adduced. His emendations of the Arabic and Hebrew texts, however, are often far-fetched. See also Horovitz, *Über die Bekanntschaft Saadia's mit der griechischen Skepsis,* in Hermann Cohen's *Festschrift,* Berlin, 1912, pp. 235-252.

D. Neumark, *Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie des Mittelalters* (I, Berlin, 1907, pp. 429-469; 536-551), a voluminous work showing great erudition, keen reasoning, and admirable industry. Owing to the author's extremely dogmatic conception of the history and development of Jewish philosophy, however, his conclusions will hardly find general acceptance.

David Rau, *Die Ethik R. Saadjas* in *MGWJ.,* 1911, pp. 385-399, 513-530, 713-728; 1912, pp. 65-79, 181-198, the most

exhaustive study on this particular subject. The end of this work has not yet appeared. The author died before he had a chance to print his book; it was to be published by Brann, the editor of the *MGWJ,* who in the meantime has also passed away.

Isaac Husik, *A History of Mediæval Jewish Philosophy,* New York, 1916, pp. 23-47 (comp. Malter, *JQR.,* N. S., vol. VIII (1917-1918), pp. 233-244).

H. Malter, *Se'adiah,* in Hastings's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, XI (1920), 279-282.

In addition to the monographs on Saadia's philosophy here enumerated and the more comprehensive works which deal with the latter in its entirety or with some important branch thereof, there are numerous dissertations in which certain phases of Saadia's philosophy are more or less minutely discussed. Of these the following may be mentioned.

A. Schmiedl, *Studien über jüdische Religionsphilosophie,* Vienna, 1869, in which various theories of Saadia are unsystematically discussed. The work has no index; see, however, pp. 42, 59, 78, 88, 94, 100 ff., 134-138, 160, 165 f., 172-175, 185, 198, 223-225, 252 f.; comp. Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* VIII, 171-177, and for a contrary view as to the merits of Schmiedl's work, see Steinschneider, *HB.,* XI, 139-141.

D. Rosin, *Die Ethik des Maimonides,* Breslau, 1876, p. 10.

L. Stein, *Die Willensfreiheit und ihr Verhältniss zur göttlichen Präscienz und Providenz bei den jüdischen Philosophen des Mittelalters,* Berlin, 1882, p. 1-14.

David Joël, *Der Aberglaube und die Stellung des Judenthums zu demselben,* II, Breslau, 1883, pp. 2-10 (discussing Saadia's attitude toward superstition).

L. Knoller, *Das Problem der Willensfreiheit in der älteren jüdischen Religionsphilosophie des Mittelalters,* Leipzig, 1884, pp. 17-29.

N. Sandler, *Das Problem der Prophetie in der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie von Saadia bis Maimûni,* Breslau, 1891, pp. 14-22.

B. Templer, *Die Unsterblichkeitslehre bei den jüdischen Philosophen des Mittelalters,* Leipzig, 1895, pp. 21-34.

J. Kramer, *Das Problem des Wunders im Zusammenhang mit dem der Providenz bei den jüdischen Religionsphilosophen des Mittelalters von Saadia bis Maimûni,* Strassburg, 1903, pp. 7-27. Kramer treats the subject very satisfactorily.

For various references to older works see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2172 ff.; *idem, Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* pp. 439 ff.; *AL.,* pp. 51 f.

VI. POLEMICS

1. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ 'Anân* (כתאב אלרד עלי ענן), "Refutation of Anan." For details relating to this work, of which nothing but a few quotations has been preserved, see Poznański's exhaustive study, *The Anti-Karaite Writings of Saadiah Gaon, JQR.,* X, 240 ff.; comp. also Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon* (reprint from *JQR.,* XVIII-XX, hereafter quoted by the initials *KLO*), London, 1908, p. 72, no. 32, and p. 94, *Addenda* to p. 242. The work is also mentioned in an ancient book-list (12th century), *JQR.,* XIII, 54, no. 69; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* pp. 51, 339; Poznański, *JQR.,* XIII, 329, no. 69; *RÉJ.,* XLV, 192, no. 2; Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XIX, 136 ff; see also *RÉJ.,* XXXIX, 208, lines 4 f., with reference to no. 19.

2. *Kitâb al-Tamyîz* (כתאב אלתמייז, in Hebrew sources ספר ההכרה, or ספר המבחן), "Book of Distinction," *i. e.* of critical analysis. Of this work against the Ḳaraites, which is supposed to have been very voluminous (see Poznański, *KLO.,* p. 95, n. 1), several fragments of considerable length and extensive extracts in the MS. work of the Ḳaraite Jephet b. 'Ali (altogether about fifteen pages in print) have thus far become known. Not all of the fragments, however, have been positively identified as having formed part of the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz.*

a) A fragment of a work by a certain Nathan b. Isaac al-Ṣiḳili (of Sicili) which seems to have been a compilation from older sources in defence of Jewish tradition in general

and the calendar in particular. Nearly the whole fragment, is according to the statement of the compiler, a verbal reproduction of the first chapter of Saadia's *Kitâb al-Tamyîz.* It was published by Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. ix, pp. 30-34; comp. Poznański *KLO.*, p. 96; *idem, Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur,* p. 42; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, pp. 76, 113, n. 2, and above, under *Calendar,* p. 169, no. 5.

b) The concluding portion of the work, three printed pages, published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVI, 102-105. For a full description of the content see Hirschfeld's introductory remarks (*ibidem,* pp. 98 f.) and especially Poznański, *KLO.*, pp. 94-96.

c) Numerous passages reproduced verbally by Jephet b. 'Ali in his Commentaries on the Bible. These were collected by Poznański and published in *JQR.*, X, 246-251.

d) A fragment of nearly three pages containing a defence of the calendar and its authority, published with an English translation and annotations by Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 261-274. Poznański's arguments in favor of Saadia's authorship of this anonymous fragment seem to me fully convincing. The question is only to which work of Saadia it belonged, but as the כתאב אלעבור, suggested by Poznański (p. 274) is, for reasons given above (p. 169, no. 5; see also p. 352, no. 5), out of the question, the only work that can come seriously into consideration is the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz,* which is also suggested by Poznański. For another fragment, thought by Harkavy to have been part of the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz,* see below, no. 3*c*.

e) A passage quoted in Hebrew by Abraham b. Ḥiyya in his ספר העבור, London, 1851, p. 96, in which the date of the composition דתתרפו=926-7 is given; comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 245. The passage is reproduced also among the לקוטים, given by Müller, *Oeuvres complètes,* IX, 149, no. 15; Rapoport, ערך מלין, pp. 85, 87. For references to the *Tamyîz* in the works of some other mediæval authors see Poznański, *l. c.;* comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 50, no. 12; Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* pp. 76 f.

In view of the comprehensive character of the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz* I am of the opinion that the passage (two pages in print) quoted by a Ḳaraite in his Arabic polemic against Saadia (Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. VIII (1917-1918), pp. 183 ff.) is likewise part of this work. That it was taken from a work against the admissibility of *ḳiyâs* (speculation) in matters of tradition (Hirschfeld, *ib.*, p. 167) is without basis, as there is no evidence that such a work by Saadia ever existed (see this *Bibliography,* VII, p. 400, no. 13). Saadia's views on Mishnah and Talmud (p. 170) agree with those found in some other works of his. Unfortunately, the editor's translation of the passage is incorrect and unintelligible. In place of what is given there ll. 22-30 read as follows: "they betook themselves to the consideration of the *principles* (of the oral law) and fixed them, calling the whole Mishnah, but the details they left unfixed in the hope that these would be preserved by the fixing of the aforementioned principles. So it was. The details thus left unfixed were preserved until we went into the second exile and were scattered even more than in the first. Then the scholars feared (read in Arabic: *faḫâfa*) that—as had happened previously (read: *ḳadîman*), before it (the Mishnah) was fixed—they might be forgotten; they therefore betook themselves also to the consideration of the details and fixed these. This they called Talmud."

3. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ Ibn Sâḳawaihi* (כתאב אלרד עלי אבן סאקויה), "Refutation of Ibn Sâḳawaihi." Of this work some extensive fragments, covering eleven pages in print, have latterly been recovered.

a) A fragment discovered by Harkavy, part of which he edited in the Russian periodical *Woskhod,* January, 1900, p. 83. The same portion was re-edited with a French translation by Poznański, *RÉJ.*, XL, 88-90. The entire fragment was published with an English translation and notes by Harkavy, *JQR.*, XIII (1901), 662-667, and for a second time with a Hebrew translation by the same in the Hebrew periodical הקדם, I (1907), 124-128. A much-damaged portion of the same fragment was published from another Genizah MS. by Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVI, 112, no. x. The whole

fragment belongs, according to Hirschfeld (*ibidem*, p. 100, bottom), to the earlier part of the work; comp. Poznański, *KLO.*, p. 6, n. 6.

b) Six leaves belonging to the middle part of the book, published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVI, 105-112, who gives also a summary of the contents (pp. 99-102).

c) A fragment edited by Harkavy with an English translation and notes as part of the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz* (JQR., XIII, 655-660), which is assigned, however, by Hirschfeld with much more probability to the latter part of the work under discussion; see Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVI, 100 f; comp. Poznański, *KLO.*, p. 7, n. 4. This fragment, like the one mentioned above (no. 3*a*), was published by Harkavy for a second time with a Hebrew translation in הקדם, I (1907), 64-68.

d) A lengthy passage quoted in Hebrew translation by Judah b. Barzillai of Barcelona (1135), in his פרוש ספר יצירה published by Halberstam, Berlin, 1885, p. 20, line 19 to p. 22, line 2 (comp. the notes of Halberstam and Kaufmann on pp. 282, 334). The passage had been previously published by Luzzatto in הליכות קדם, pp. 69 ff.; comp. also Luzzatto, בית האוצר, I (Lemberg, 1847), 12. That the passage was taken from the work against Ibn Sâḳawaihi, however, is only a probable conjecture, but not positively established (see above, p. 267, top; comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, VIII, 690; *KLO.*, p. 6, n. 7; 9, n. 2, and p. 97, top.

e) Another shorter passage in Hebrew quoted by the same author, p. 34, lines 3-16. Here too the origin is not quite certain; see Poznański, *ll. cc.*

f) A passage quoted in Hebrew by Abraham b. Ḥiyya (1136) in his ספר העבור, p. 94, which, as Poznański properly suggests (*JQR.*, X, 253), is taken from our work. In *Oeuvre complètes de Saadia*, IX, 141, no. 50, this passage is placed among Saadia's Responsa, where it hardly belongs; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 48; above, p. 349. For other quotations in the works of Rabbanite and Ḳaraite authors see Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 252-254; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 51, no. 15, where, however, the reference to a fragment,

edited by Lambert, *REJ.*, XL, 84, is a mistake, as that fragment is part of Saadia's ספר הגלוי; see Lambert, *l. c.*, p. 260. Bacher (*REJ.*, XXXIX, 205 f., nos. 4 and 5) finds the book mentioned in an ancient book-list of the *Genizah*.

4. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ al-Mutaḥâmil* כתאב אלרד עלי (היוס?) אלמתחאמל), "Refutation of the Overbearing Aggressor," perhaps again Ibn Sâḳawaihi. Only two leaves have so far been found and published by Hirschfeld with an English translation and notes, *JQR.*, XVIII, 113-119. For quotations by Hebrew authors (under the title תשובה על הטוען) see Poznański, *JQR.*, X, 254 f.; Steinschneider, AL., p. 51, no. 14. The quotations of Judah b. Barzillai, to which both Steinschneider and Poznański refer, were later assigned by Poznański to Saadia's work against Ibn Sâḳawaihi; see the references above, no. 3, letters *d* and *e*. Regarding the ספר היחוד (*i. e.* the second chapter of Saadia's *Kitâb al-'Amânât*), mentioned there by Steinschneider, see especially Poznański, *JQR.*, VIII, 691. The polemical work under consideration is mentioned also in two old book-lists from the Genizah (12th century), printed in Schechter's *Saadyana*, no. xxxvii (p. 79, line 16; comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana*, p. 23, no. 24), and in *JQR.*, XIII, 54, no. 59; p. 327, no. 59. The enigmatic word היוס, which occurs as part of the title in one of the sources (Nissim b. Jacob), is perhaps the mutilated name of the Ḳaraite against whom the work was written. That it was Ibn Sâḳawaihi is only a conjecture. In the aforementioned lists, the word is omitted; comp. Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVIII, 113, n. 1; see also Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 109, n. 4. For refutations of the Ḳaraites Ben Zuṭa and Daniel b. Moses al-Ḳumisi, supposed to have been written by Saadia, see below, *Bibliography*, section VII, p. 398, nos. 9, 10.

5. *Kitâb al-Radd 'alâ Ḥayawaihi al-Balḫî* (כתאב אלרד עלי חַיַוַיְהִ אלבלכִי), "Refutation of Ḥayawaihi (*vulgo* Ḥiwi)*

* The proper pronunciation of the name is, as suggested by Poznański, חיוי הבלכִי, p. 6, n. 3, Ḥayawaihi (or Ḥaiwaihi), which agrees with the spelling חיויה in the St. Petersburg MS. of the *Kitâb al-Amânât* (Landauer, p. 37) and in Ḳirḳisâni's *Kitâb al-'Anwâr*

of Balkh" (Persia). Under this title the work is referred to by Saadia himself in his *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* p. 37, l. 6 (*Emūnōt,* ed. Slucki, p. 20). Saadia mentions the work also in the ספר הגלוי, ed. Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, 177, and in his Polemic against Ibn Sâḳawaihi (not in the כתאב אלתמייז, as Davidson (see below), pp. 14, 82, following Graetz, has it), in the passage reproduced from it by Judah b. Barzillai, פרוש ספר יצירה, p. 21 (see above, p. 383, letter *d*). In this passage one stanza of Saadia's original text is preserved, which makes it evident that the work was written in Hebrew and in rhymed prose. Various mediæval authors, both among the Ḳaraites and the Rabbanites, refer to Ḥiwi as a heretic, some of the latter pointing out the fact that Saadia refuted his heresies; thus, the anonymous author of the *Kitâb ma'ânî al-nafs* (12th century) ed. Goldziher, Berlin, 1907, p. 16, ll. 20-24; Abraham Ibn Daud, סדר הקבלה, ed. Neubauer, p. 66; Simon Duran (15th c.), מגן אבות, Leghorn, 1785, *fol.* 31*a;* Saadia Ibn Danân (15th c.), חמדה גנוזה, ed. Edelmann, Königsberg, 1856, pp. 16*a,* 28*b,* and others. In more recent times (since the appearance in the בכה"ע, 1829, of the *Biography* of Saadia by Rapoport, who first took up the matter) the question of Ḥiwi's personality and writings, as well as of the nature of Saadia's polemic against him, has been the subject of minute study and investigation. Among other things it was pointed out in particular that numerous passages in Saadia's main philosophic work, the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* in which he argues against an unnamed opponent, were directed against Ḥiwi; see Graetz, *Geschichte* (4), V, *Note* 20, pp. 533 f. (Hebrew edition, III, 473 f.); especially the extensive article of Guttmann, *MGWJ.,* 1879,

(Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, p. 147, n. 2). This pronunciation is supported also by three MSS. of Ibn Tibbon's translation (Parma and the Vatican) of which I possess copies and in which the name is vocalized חִיְוִי (omitting the ה). The usual pronunciation Ḥiwi or Ḥiwwi (Bacher; see Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 65, n. 12) is based on a wrong analogy to the Biblical name of a Cananite tribe (Gen., 10, 17). The proper analogy is the Persian name Tatnai (Ezra, 5, 3).

pp. 260-270, 289-300. An exhaustive study of the subject was published by Poznański under the title חיוי הבלכי, Berdyczew, 1908 (reprint from הגרן, VII, 112-137), in which all the material then available was collected and presented in a clear and systematic way.

Of the text of Saadia's polemic against Ḥiwi nothing was known until recently except the stanza of four rhymes preserved by Judah b. Barzillai. It was therefore of great interest to the scholarly world that a considerable portion of this work was lately discovered by Israel Davidson among the Genizah fragments in the Cambridge University Library, containing 73 stanzas of four rhymes each, about one-sixth of the whole work, which, as Davidson, p. 34, shows, consisted of about 460 stanzas. Davidson edited the fragment with an English translation and explanatory notes under the title *Saadia's Polemic against Hiwi Al-Balkhi,* New York, 1915 (vol. V of Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America). In a lucid introduction the editor briefly reviews the literature of the subject, gives a minute analysis and appreciation of the contents of the recovered text, and brings out the points that are of either literary or historical interest. Towards the end of the volume he reproduces all the passages relating to Ḥiwi in the works of Saadia (numbering altogether 15), as well as all the passages occurring in the Arabic and Hebrew works of other mediæval authors, so that we have here the entire material bearing on Saadia's polemic against Ḥiwi (comp. Gaster, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 1915, pp. 575-577; Poznański, *ZfhB.* XIX, 2-8). Davidson's edition was made use of by Poznański, who has reedited the whole with Hebrew notes under the title, תשובות רס"ג על שאלות חיוי הבלכי. Warsaw, 1916 (see *ZfhB.* XX, 52 f.).

Of Ḥiwi's writings nothing has thus far become known. In 1901 a remarkable Genizah fragment of twelve pages in Hebrew verse was published in the *JQR.*, XIII, 345-374, by Schechter who thinks that it emanated from the school of Ḥiwi. The fragment contains very vigorous attacks on the Bible and was later made the subject of minute study by

Bacher (*JQR.*, XIII, 741-745), Poznański (*ib.*, 746-748), Porges (*ib.*, XIV, 129-133), Seligsohn (*RÉJ.*, XLVI, 99-122), who also translated it into French, and David Kohn (הגרן, V, 5-42), who re-edited it with vowel-points and additional notes (comp. Poznański, *ZfhB.*, X, 68). Opinion on the identity of the author and the specific object of his work is still divided; comp. Poznański, חיוי הבלכי, p. 27-30; Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 65, n. 12, where for "XII, 329" (line 31) read: XIV, 129.

In an ancient book-list coming from the Genizah a כתאב חוי בלכי is mentioned (*JQR.*, XIII, 54, no. 71), which in all probability refers to Ḥiwi's work containing the 200 objections to the Bible, or to some other work of his. Poznański, *JQR.*, XIII, 329, no. 71, thinks that Saadia's polemic against Ḥiwi is here meant, which is quite improbable, as in this case the word *Radd*= Refutation, which is the main part of the title, could hardly have been omitted by the cataloguer.

6. *Sēfer ha-Galui* (ספר הגלוי), Arabic *al-Kitâb al-Târid* (אלכתאב אלטארד), usually translated "Book of the Exiled One" (see below). The first intimation of the existence of parts of this work, which had been known only from two quotations in the works of Abraham b. Hiyya (ספר העבור ed. Filipofski, p. x) and Abraham Ibn Daud (סדר הקבלה, ed. Neubauer, I, 66), came, as in the case of the אגרון (see above, p. 306), from the Ḳaraite Abraham Firkovich, who discovered the MS. in 1864 in Egypt, and in an article in the weekly המליץ, 1868, nos. 26, 27 (also separately under the title מבוא להקדמות רמות etc., Odessa, 1868) gave some information as to its contents (comp. Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, X, 262; XI, 155). Three years later, part of the text appeared in Hebrew translation in the monthly periodical הכרמל, 1871-1872, pp. 63-68. In 1891 the fragments which were brought by Firkovich and acquired by the St. Petersburg Imperial Library, were critically edited by Harkavy, who added a literal Hebrew translation, copious notes, and an exhaustive Introduction, in which all the historical and philological data relating to the work, as well as some important additional material, which he discovered subse-

quently, were minutely discussed. Harkavy's monograph on the *Sēfer ha-Galui* forms the second part of his *Zikron,* vol. V, Berlin, 1891, pp. 133-235; see the reviews of this work by Bacher, *Expository Times,* XI (1899-1900), 454-458; *REJ.,* XXIV, 307-318, XXV, 143 f.; Porgès, *ib.,* XXV, 144-151, and Neubauer, *JQR.,* IV, 490-494. The publication of Harkavy has aroused considerable controversy among scholars. At first the meaning and correctness of both the Hebrew and the Arabic title were doubted. It was pointed out that the Hebrew *galui* does not mean "exiled," but "open," "manifest;" while the Arabic *târid* can only mean "one who exiles, banishes others," but not one who is himself exiled. Neubauer (*JQR.,* IV, 492) proposed to retain the meaning "open" for the Hebrew and to read in Arabic correspondingly טאהר. Others proposed the reading *gillui,* "manifestation," and this reading is still maintained by Eppenstein in his recent *Beiträge,* p. 129 (*"Das Buch der offenen Widerlegung"*); see, however, Harkavy, *l. c.,* pp. 142, 180, n. 7, especially *JQR.,* XII, 550, where he defends the meaning "exiled," and suggests the change of the Arabic טארד into the passive form טריד, or טַרַד, admitting the possibility that the Hebrew title contains an allusion to Jeremiah, 32, 14, in the sense of an "Open Book." The question regarding the title becomes still more complicated by the fact that R. Mubashshir, a contemporary of Saadia, refers to the work by the title *Kitâb al-I'tibâr* (כתאב אלאעתבאר; Harkavy *l. c.,* 182), which means "Book of Taking Example," *i. e.* an admonition to the reader to derive moral lessons from the author's experiences as described in his work. This difficulty can be disposed of, however, by assuming that Mubashshir did not quote the real title of the book, but referred to it in a general descriptive way. His paraphrase does, indeed, cover the contents of the book. The reason given by Harkavy (*l. c.,* p. 182, n. 2) for this form of R. Mubashshir's quotation is far fetched and the interpretation of Neubauer (*JQR.,* IV, 492) inadequate; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 68, n. 45. Harkavy's view (p. 146, followed by Eppenstein in his notes to Graetz, *Geschichte,* V, 531, n. 1) that the title כתאב אלאמתאל

quoted by the Muhammedan author Ibn al-Nadîm (who wrote in 987) as a work by Saadia divided into ten chapters, refers to the work under consideration, is altogether improbable, since the latter, contrary to the assertion of Harkavy and Eppenstein, contains only seven chapters (see Bacher, *JQR.*, XII, 704; *JE.*, X, 585; Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 68, n. 45). אמתאל is merely a mistake for אמאנאת.

It must be admitted that none of the explanations is satisfactory. Aside from the linguistic difficulties, it would be strange if Saadia, contrary to his wont, should have designated an important writing by a title which contains merely a personal allusion (*i. e.*, to his exile), but does not indicate in the least the contents of the work. Moreover, if we consider the whole verse in which the title occurs, it becomes obvious that the meaning *exiled* for *galui,* which is gained only by making the latter an artificial substitute for *gōlēh,* is untenable. The verse reads: דברי ספר הגלוי הכמוס ראוה וחסון מוסר אמרי צחות הם אוצרו. The words כמוס (Deuter., 32, 34) and חסון (Isaiah, 23, 16) which mean *hidden, treasured,* are clearly intended as a contrast to *galui=open, visible,* the author wishing to say "this is the 'Open Book' (Jeremiah, 32, 14), which contains hidden moral lessons and stored up ethics; words of rhetoric are its treasure" (ראוה, Ez., 28, 17, is rendered in the immediately following Arabic verse by אעתבאר, as quoted by Mubashshir (see above, p. 388), so that ראוה receives the meaning of learning, that is, *beholding* the truth; אוצרו is also suggestive of באוצרתי, Deuter., *ib.*). We know from Saadia's general Introduction to the work that these were, indeed, its main characteristics; see Malter, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 489-495. The meaning *exiled* suggested itself only by the incidental fact that the work was written during Saadia's retirement, and then the Arabic *târid* was likewise given this unwarranted meaning. However, אלכתאב אלטארד, with the double article, which in the meaning "Book of the Exiled" is grammatically impossible, is not at all a translation of ספר הגלוי, but, as suggested by Bacher (*Expository Times,* XI, 454-458, and *REJ.*, XXIV, 313; comp. Porgès, *ib.*, XXV, 150), means merely "The

Book that Refutes" and is used by Saadia as a descriptive title to designate the aim and purpose of the work. It expresses the same thought as "Kitâb al-Radd," which is the usual title of Saadia's polemical writings. It is true, all other words in this Arabic line are a verbal translation of the corresponding Hebrew; but the words ספר הגלוי, being bodily taken over as a technical title from Jeremiah, did not require any special translation, and the author replaced them by two words which, for the Arabic reader, better indicate the character and content of the work.

Of far greater importance than the question of the title seemed for a time the literary controversy that arose about the origin and genuineness of the fragment. Some time after the appearance of Harkavy's work, Professor D. S. Margoliouth came out with an ingenious article (*JQR.*, XII (1900), 502-532), in which he endeavored to prove with much detail and acumen that the fragment is no fragment at all, but a fabrication by some Karaite, composed after the year 962, and intended to serve as a lampoon directed against Saadia, satirically imitating and parodying the latter's philological method and style, and inserting some of Saadia's opinions (see *ib.*, p. 532). The article called forth rejoinders by Harkavy (*ib.*, pp. 532-554) and Bacher (*ib.*, pp. 703-705), which were followed by a reply by Margoliouth and another "Rejoinder" by Harkavy (*ib.*, pp. 705-707; the same controversy was carried on between Margoliouth and Bacher in the *Expository Times,* XI (1900), 46, 92, 192, 287, 521, 563). Once more Margoliouth tried to defend his theory (*JQR.*, XIII, 155-158), but it found no acceptance among scholars. To-day, after the genuineness of the *Sēfer ha-Galui* has been positively established by additional MS. material, readers of Professor Margoliouth's articles may still admire the ingenuity and art with which he succeeded in making an entirely groundless theory appear tenable, but they will otherwise dismiss the whole matter as a curious literary episode in the history of our work.

As already noted, the *Sēfer ha-Galui* was written in Hebrew and about three years later an Arabic translation and

commentary, with an introduction, were added thereto by the author, who describes this work as "The Book that Refutes." There is no sufficient proof that the Arabic text was accompanied by a second enlarged edition of the original Hebrew text, as has been repeatedly asserted; though this may well have been so, as was the case with other writings of Saadia. At any rate the Arabic was not merely a repetition of the Hebrew content by way of translation, as hitherto assumed, but a new work, which, aside from the literal translation and the interpretation of the difficult rhetorical text of the *Sēfer ha-Galui,* contained much additional material of a controversial character (see below, p. 392, under *b, c*). Both texts must have circulated separately as well, for among the fragments we possess there are some that contain the Hebrew or the Arabic only, while others have both side by side. This is also obvious from two ancient book-lists, that come from the Genizah, the one of which records the "Sēfer ha-Galui" (Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 79), the other the "Tafsir Sēfer ha-Galui" (*JQR.,* XIII, 55, no. 77; comp. Lambert, *RÉJ.,* XL, 260). The latter refers to the Arabic text, Saadia using the word *tafsir* alike for translation and commentary; comp. Harkavy, p. 146, n. 6, and above, note 308. For the suggested identification of the *Sēfer ha-Galui* with a *Kitâb al-Kashf* see below, section VII, p. 402, no. 15.

To afford a better survey of the existing material I shall here arrange the Hebrew and Arabic fragments in two separate sections following in each group the order of publication.

A. HEBREW

a) Four pages (18 lines each) the first two of which represent the initial portion of the work, while the other two probably belong to the third chapter. The two fragments were edited together by Schechter (*JQR.,* XIV, 37 ff., reprinted in his *Saadyana,* pp. 4-7), who by way of introduction gives also a clear analysis of their contents. The first four lines of the first fragment (*Saadyana,* p. 4) had

been previously published by Schechter from another Genizah MS. with some variations (*JQR.*, XII, 460).

b) A fragment consisting of two pages (19 lines each). The text is divided into verses and provided with vowel-points and accents like the books of the Bible. It was recently published with a French translation and notes by B. Chapira, *RÉJ.*, LXVIII (1914), 3-8. In his introductory remarks Chapira still repeats the erroneous view of Harkavy that the *Sēfer ha-Galui* consisted of *ten* chapters three of which, he conjectures, were subsequently omitted by the Gaon. This theory was refuted by Bacher long ago (*RÉJ.*, XXIV, 314); see above, pp. 270 f., and Malter, *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 492, nn. 20, 26.

B. ARABIC

a) A fragment covering sixteen pages (22-23 lines each), edited by Harkavy with an elaborate introduction, Hebrew translation, and copious notes (*Zikrōn*, V, 150-181). It contains nearly the whole Introduction of Saadia (lacking only a few lines of the beginning) and the first three Hebrew verses of the work itself. The first verse is followed by the Arabic translation, which is missing in the same portion published by Schechter from another Genizah fragment (see above, under *Hebrew*, letter *a*).

Another fragment of the same Introduction (four pages of 18 lines each) was published by Malter (from a MS. belonging to Dr. Cyrus Adler in the Library of the Dropsie College in Philadelphia) with an English translation and notes in the *JQR.*, N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 487-499. The text agrees on the whole with that published by Harkavy (pp. 151, l. 16-158, l. 1), but offers numerous, partly important, variants and also supplements some gaps in the text of Harkavy. For still another fragment of the Introduction, agreeing with Harkavy, p. 169, l. 15; p. 173, l. 12, see B. Chapira, *RÉJ.*, LXVIII, 2.

b) Two leaves (four pages, 16-17 lines each), representing two different parts of the Arabic version, but edited as one by Harkavy (pp. 187-193), who calls attention, however, to

the gap between the two leaves. Like the preceding fragment, this is translated by the editor into Hebrew and accompanied by explanatory notes. Both fragments contain a denunciation of David ben Zakkai and a reply to the criticism of the *Sēfer ha-Galui* in its first edition; see above, pp. 390 f.

c) Two leaves (four pages, 13 lines each), likewise belonging to two different parts of the work, edited with a French translation by M. Lambert, *REJ.*, XL, 84-86, 260. It is important to note that the first leaf of this fragment corresponds to the Hebrew text in Schechter's *Saadyana,* p. 6, leaf 2 *verso,* lines 10 ff.; for here we see clearly the relation of the two texts to one another, namely, that the Arabic work contained besides the translation also a commentary on the Hebrew. The author quotes one or two catchwords from the Hebrew text to indicate the verse or paragraph of the *Sēfer ha-Galui,* which he is about to explain, and then comments upon the passage freely. It is furthermore to be noted that the larger part of the second leaf is identical with fragment *b* published by Harkavy (187, lines 1-12), so that the latter is a continuation of the text edited by Lambert. In this continuation we see the author interrupting his interpretation of the Hebrew text and suddenly beginning to defend its style and grammar against the objections made by his opponents. This, of course, could not have formed part of the original *Sēfer ha-Galui.* It is thus clear beyond a doubt that the Arabic *al-Kitâb al-Târid,* was not merely a translation of the *Sēfer ha-Galui,* but an independent and more comprehensive polemical work, the purpose of which was to translate the original Hebrew text, to explain the obscure passages occurring therein, and more particularly to refute the attacks made upon it by its detractors.

d) Two fragments, four pages each (18-20 lines to the page), were recently discovered in Cairo by Bernard Chapira, who published them with a French translation in the *RÉJ.*, LXVIII (1914), 9-14. In these two fragments each Hebrew verse is followed by a literal Arabic translation, thus evidently belonging to the Arabic edition of the work. Both

seem to have formed part of the sixth chapter, but the text, especially of the second fragment, is so badly mutilated that nothing definite can be said about the contents. We receive here the interesting information that the two opposing parties were designated by "right" (Saadia and his followers) and "left" (the Exilarch, Sarjâdah, etc.); see Chapira, *ib.*, pp. 2, 7, n. 3; 11, ll. 2-4; B. Lewin, רב שרירא גאון, Jaffa, 1916, p. 2. To these fragments of the *Sēfer ha-Galui* itself may be added:

e) A fragment (43 lines) of a work of R. Mubashshir, in which the author criticizes certain portions of Saadia's *Kitâb al-'I'tibâr* (see above, p. 388), quoting the text of the latter, as it seems, literally (published by Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, 183-185). From the contents it appears that he quotes from *al-Kitâb al-Târid* and not from the *Sēfer ha-Galui,* for Saadia defends certain Hebrew expressions he used in the latter, to which Mubashshir objects. Moreover, it is not probable that Mubashshir would have quoted the Hebrew original in Arabic translation. The title, however, under which he quotes the work, may refer to both texts as a whole. For two other quotations from the work under consideration see Harkavy, pp. 196 ff.

For completeness' sake it should be noted that the text published by Harkavy was translated into Hebrew by Samuel Firkovich, a grandson of Abraham Firkovich, who sent the MS. of his translation to H. J. Gurland of Odessa. The latter placed it at the disposal of David Kohn (Kahana), who published it in the אוצר הספרות, IV (1892), 318 ff., also separately under the awkward title ספר לתולדות רס"ג, Cracow, 1892, pp. 27 ff. He suppressed the name of the translator; see his note at the beginning of the translation; Harkavy, p. 149, n. 2, and above, p. 306 under *'Agrōn.*

VII. WORKS OF UNCERTAIN DESCRIPTION

Under this heading I propose to bring together a number of writings which, with only one or two exceptions (see nos. 2 and 3), are explicitly quoted in trustworthy sources as the products of the Gaon, so that there is no reason to doubt

their genuineness. The difficulty is that the titles under which they are quoted, or, as the case may be, the general terms in which they are referred to, leave it open to doubt whether the reference is to separate works of Saadia, which, like other of his writings, were subsequently lost, or to some parts or chapters of more comprehensive books which have been dealt with above under the various headings of Saadia's literary activity. We know from other instances that Saadia himself, after issuing short monographs on given subjects, later combined them into one volume with a different, more general title, and that on the other hand he sometimes made excerpts from his larger works and, issued them as monographs (see above, pp. 194, 267). There is also sufficient evidence that later readers, who found some of Saadia's works too extensive and were interested only in particular sections, likewise made various excerpts for themselves and that these circulated as separate writings (see below, no. 2). It is therefore unsafe to conclude from the occurrence of such titles or references that there existed the same number of separate and original works of Saadia. In many instances they probably designate parts of works which are otherwise known by some general title. Nor is the material at hand sufficient to enable us to ascertain in each case whether we have before us a reference to an otherwise unknown work or merely a new title. As a matter of fact, some of the writings which were enumerated above as separate works may well belong here. I shall indicate them by a mere repetition of the titles and cross-references.

PHILOLOGY AND EXEGESIS

1. נקוד רב סעדיה, a grammatical work on *Punctuation* is quoted by Rashi, Commentary on Psalms, 45, 10, but according to Berliner (see Steinschneider, *Vorlesungen über die Kunde hebräischer Handschriften,* Leipzig, 1897, p. 15) the passage is a later interpolation. Bacher (*Die Anfänge der hebräischen Grammatik,* Leipzig, 1895, p. 60, n. 2), on the other hand, thinks that it formed the sixth chapter of the

Kutub al-Luġah, which chapter was called by Saadia כתאב אלדגש ואלרפי ; comp. Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 62, no. 23; see also above, note 303.

2. תפסיר ואלה המשפטים, *Interpretation of the Section Mishpāṭim* (Exodus, 21-24), mentioned in a book-list from the Genizah, Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 79 (no. xxxvii). The name of the author is not given there, but in all probability it is the treatise mentioned by Isaac Gaon, a preacher of the 13th century (see Steinschneider, *AL.,* § 168) quoted by Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2185, who remarks that various parts of Saadia's commentaries on the Bible must have existed as separate treatises with special introductions. Isaac Gaon indeed quotes צדר תפסיר ואלה המשפטים, that is, *Introduction* to the Commentary on Mishpatim; comp. Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* p. 20, n. 2 [comp. below, p. 427].

3. תפסיר אחרי מות, *Interpretation of the Section Aharē Mōt* (Leviticus, 16-18), mentioned in the list referred to under no. 2. Here again no author is named, but in the same list several other books are mentioned without the name of Saadia, though his authorship of these books is definitely established. Thus we find the *Sēfer ha-Galui,* the *Kitâb al-Ta'rîḫ* (see above, pp. 353 f.), and at least five other works of Saadia mentioned anonymously. The compiler of the list probably gave the name of Saadia whenever it was found in the MSS. he catalogued; where he did not add the name it may have been missing also in his MSS. For another explanation see below, p. 407. There is also a strong probability that this *Tafsir* is identical with the ספר עריות which was discussed above, p. 346, no. 4. It should be added that nos. 2 and 3 are mentioned together in the same line [see also below, *Postscript,* p. 427].

HALAKAH

4. שבועת היסת, *Treatise on the Oath of Inducement,* referred to by Isaac b. Reuben of Barcelona (11th century) at the end of the third chapter of his שערי שבועות (see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2161). The anonymous Arabic Genizah

fragment (Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue*, II, no. 2643, *opus* 23) which deals with the same subject is perhaps part of the treatise in question, as suggested by Cowley, *l. c.*

5. הלכות נדה, see above, *Bibliography*, pp. 348 f., nos. 7, 10.

6. *Tafsir al-'Arāyōt*, see above, p. 346; 396, no. 3. For a treatise on charity (הלכות צדקה) see note 369. For תפסיר אבות מלאכות see note 366. A הלכות תפלין by Saadia is said to have recently been discovered and published by S. A. Wertheimer, Jerusalem.

CHRONOLOGY

7. *Seder Tannaim we-Amoraim*, see above, notes 357, 395, and *Bibliography*, p. 354, no. 2. For the "Four Gates" (ארבעה שערים) see above, p. 169, no. 2.

PHILOSOPHY

8. *Hadd al-'Insân* (חד אלאנסאן), "Definition of Man." I insert this work here (though it does not strictly belong to the class of writings here enumerated) as the authorship of Saadia is not fully established. A MS. in the Royal Library of Berlin (see Steinschneider, *Verzeichnis der hebräischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, I, p. 48, no. 72,[4]) contains an anonymous Hebrew translation of the first chapter of the work in question, which is explicitly attributed to Saadia, the opening lines reading: בעזרת הבורא אתחיל זה הספר ששמו חד אלאנסאן כמו שפירש רבי סעדיה ראש ישיבה נ"ע . . . . ורבי סעדיה נ"ע חיבר זה הספר מספרי החכמים ותיקן אותו בה' שערים; see the rest of the quotation in Steinschneider's *HB.*, X, 25. Kaufmann (*Die Sinne*, p. 94, n. 23) nevertheless ascribes the work to Abraham b. Ḥiyya, because he is quoted by Jedaiah ha-Penini (about 1300) as the author of a work named גדר האדם, which, Kaufmann thinks, is merely the translation of the Arabic title of our work. This identification cannot be maintained, for Abraham b. Ḥiyya wrote all his works in Hebrew, not in Arabic, while the MS., as quoted before, plainly shows that the original was Arabic; comp. Steinschneider, *Abraham Ibn Esra* (in *Supplement zur historisch-literarischen Abtheilung der Zeitschrift*

für Mathematik und Physik, vol. XXV, pp. 59-128), p. 119. From the contents of the extracts made by Steinschneider, *HB.* X, 25, and Kaufmann, *l. c.,* pp. 95, 124, n. 6, dealing with anatomy, nothing definite can be concluded. Various passages, showing Saadia's familiarity with the works on medicine and anatomy of his day, are found also in Saadia's genuine works, *e. g.* in his Commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* pp. 97 f., 103 (see above, note 454); *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* pp. 196 (*'Emūnōt,* ed. Cracow, p. 131), 201 (134), 316 (205 f.); comp. above, pp. 182, 187 (n. 437), 193. The topics noted in the outline of the contents of the other four chapters—on the nature of the soul, mind, etc., on the four elements, on the parallelism between the microcosm and macrocosm, and on the definition or limits (חידוד = Arabic *ḥudûd,* plural of *ḥadd*) of life and death and what follows thereafter—are all subjects treated by Saadia in his extant philosophic writings; see above, pp. 187, 222 ff. I expect to arrive at a definite conclusion by a future examination of the Berlin MS. For the present we have no sufficient ground to deny Saadia's authorship of this work against the explicit testimony of the anonymous Hebrew translator. Steinschneider mentions the book in the index to his *Arabische Literatur* (*Register* IV, p. 11, s. v. חד) as a work of Saadia, but there is no trace of it in the paragraph dealing with the works of the Gaon; see also Harkavy, *Zikron,* V, 162, n. 3.

POLEMICS

9. A *Refutation* of the Ḳaraite Abu-l-Surri b. *Zuṭa* or *Ziṭa,* twice referred to by Abraham Ibn Ezra in his Commentary on the Pentateuch (Exodus, 21, 24, and Leviticus, 23, 15, in the recension published by M. Friedlaender, *Essays,* etc., Hebrew part, p. 70). It cannot be inferred, however, from either of the passages that Saadia refuted the Ḳaraite in a special treatise. The latter, who is supposed to have lived in Egypt, may have had oral controversies with Saadia in that country, which were subsequently recorded by the Gaon in his commentaries on the Bible, whence they were then taken by Ibn Ezra; see for the whole matter Poznański,

JQR., X, 255, no. 5; *idem*, KLO., p. 4, and the references given there, n. 2; comp. Bacher, *JE.*, X, 582, col. 1, no. 5.

10. *Refutation of the Karaite Daniel b. Moses al-Kumisi* or Kumsi (אלקומסי) of the ninth century, a small Hebrew fragment of which was published by Schechter, *Saadyana*, no. xiii. It is not quite certain that the fragment is part of a separate polemic of Saadia against the Karaite, though the text seems to favor this assumption; comp. Poznański, *JQR.*, VIII, 681-684; *idem*, *J. E.*, IV, 432 f.; *Schechter's Saadyana*, p. 10, *s. v.* Daniel b. Moses; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 75; above, note 387.

11. *A Refutation of the Masorite Aaron b. Moses b. Asher*, whom Saadia knew personally. Dûnâsh b. Librât quotes a sentence (תלף תלף האותות) in which Saadia polemicizes against Ben Asher (see Baer and Strack, דקדוקי הטעמים, xi, n. 11). Here again it is not certain that the sentence was taken from a special polemic of Saadia; it may have occurred in one of his grammatical or exegetical works; comp. Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2200, no. 13; Bacher, *Anfänge*, p. 48; *JE.*, X, 582, no. 11; Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 71, n. 1. Luzzatto's interpretation of the sentence (בית האוצר, I (1847), 11*b*) is far-fetched. It may perhaps not be a direct quotation of Saadia's words at all, but merely the information given by Dûnâsh, that according to Saadia the letters תלף are the radicals (האותות) of the noun תלפיות (Canticles, 4, 4), a view which Dûnâsh opposes. The second תלף is perhaps an erroneous dittography, or the first תלף is a corruption of the catchword תלפיות, which stood there originally.

12. *Makâlah fî sirâg al-Sabt* (מקאלה פי סראג אלסבת), "Treatise on the Light of Sabbath." The question whether or not it is permitted to have light in the house on the eve of Sabbath was an important point of controversy between Karaites and Rabbanites. A work of Saadia under the above title is mentioned twice in an ancient book-list published from the Genizah by Elkan N. Adler and I. Broydé, *JQR.*, XIII, 55, nos. 78, 87. Abraham Ibn Ezra, Commentary on Exodus,

35, 3, says: והגאון רב סעדיה חבר ספר נכבד תשובות על החולקים על קדמונינו על נר שבת, which probably refers to the work under consideration. Poznański, *JQR.*, XIII, 329, no. 78, however, thinks that the *Maḳâlah* (meaning also paragraph, chapter) was not a separate book, but formed part of the *Kitâb al-Tamyîz;* see above, *Bibliography,* VI, p. 380; Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 44, ll. 10-15 [below, p. 427].

13. *Kitâb al-ḳiyâm 'alâ al-sharâï' al-sam'iyya* (כתאב אלקיאם עלי אלשראיע אלסמעיה), "Book *in Support* of the Ceremonial (literally: revealed) Laws." Under this title a work of Saadia is quoted in a Bodleian MS. which contains also Saadia's Commentary on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah;* see Munk, *Notice sur R. Saadia,* p. 14, n. 2. According to Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2166, the same work is referred to by Moses Ibn Ezra under the title *Kitâb taḥṣîl al-sharâï' al-sam'iyya* (כתאב תחציל אלשראיע אלסמעיה), "Book on the *Manifestation* of the Ceremonial Laws," while the Muhammedan author Al-Nadîm quotes it briefly as כתאב אלשראיע [see *Postscript*]. Numerous theories, some rather strange, all of them recorded by Steinschneider, *l. c.,* have been advanced as to the identity of this work. Among these theories is worth mentioning that of Dukes, *Beiträge,* p. 12 (noted by Steinschneider, *CB.*, 2163, no. 10), identifying it with the "Introduction to the Talmud," a view that greatly commends itself; see above, pp. 159, 342. Later a suggestion of Haneberg was taken up by Bacher (*Abraham Ibn Esra's Einleitung zu seinem Pentateuch-Commentar,* p. 20, n. 2) to the effect that the work is identical with the *Kitâb al-Amânât,* a view considered "plausible" also by Poznański, *RÉJ.*, XL, 87, who had previously (*JQR.*, X, 259) adopted the opinion of Munk, that it was some sort of a compendium of laws comp. Wunderbar, *Literaturblatt des Orients,* 1847, pp. 487-490. Recently again it was proposed by Hirschfeld (*JQR.*, XVIII, 600, n. 3, repeated by him in the Cohen-*Festschrift,* p. 265, and lately again in the *JQR.*, N. S., vol. VIII (1917-1918), p. 167) to read the title: כתאב אבטאל אלקיאם פי אלשראיע אלסמעיה, "Book on the *Rejection of Analogy in* (the interpretation of) the Ceremonial Laws." These

changes in the title, as was pointed out by Poznański (*KLO.*, p. 97), have no justification whatever. Moreover, the reading אלקיאם (for אלקיאם = analogy, which had already been suggested by Steinschneider, *HB.* IV (1861), 46, n. 2) is supported by the title of the work given below, no. 14; comp. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 110, n. 1, where אלקיאם is a mistake for אלקיאם.

On the basis of the existing material no definite conclusion can be arrived at, but I am inclined to think, with Hirschfeld, Cohen's *Festschrift* (*Judaica,* Berlin, 1912, pp. 265 f.), that the *Kitâb al-Ḳiyâm,* or *Taḥṣîl,* was originally a polemical treatise in defense of those religious laws that are not dictated by human reason, but are based on the doctrine of divine revelation (see above, p. 208). Subsequently Saadia made this treatise a part of his larger work, the *Kitâb al-'Amânât,* in which it forms the third chapter. We know that most of the chapters of this work, if not all of them, were originally circulated as separate writings, partly also under different titles (see above, note 456). It should be added that the title *Taḥṣîl* under which it is quoted by Moses Ibn Ezra is found in the list, *JQR.,* XIII, 54, no. 59 (see Poznański, *JQR.,* XIII, 327, no. 59), so that Eppenstein's doubt (*Beiträge,* p. 110, n. 1) is not justified. For further references see Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 50, no. 13; comp. Cowley, *Catalogue,* no. 2828,2.

14. *Kitâb kasr al-radd 'alâ al-ḳiyâm* (כתאב כסר אלרד עלי אלקיאם), "Rejoinder against the Refutation of the *Ḳiyâm,*" *i. e.,* of the work under that title discussed in the preceding paragraph. This Rejoinder is recorded as a work of Saadia in the ancient book-list published by Bacher, *RÉJ.,* XXXIX, 200, no. 29; comp. Bacher's interpretation, *ibidem.,* p. 206, no. 5, who suggests that it may have been directed against the Ḳaraite Ibn Sâḳawaihi, the author of the *Kitâb al-Faḍâiḥ,* in which attacks on Saadia's *Kitâb al-Kiyâm* (above, no. 13) may well have occurred (see above, p. 265). If Bacher's suggestion is correct, we may assume that this Rejoinder, too, was not a separate work, but that part of Saadia's polemic against Ibn Sâkawaihi (see this *Bibliography,* VI,

pp. 382 f.) which dealt particularly with the latter's attacks on the *Kitâb al-Kiyâm*. Less probability attaches to the suggestion of Poznański (*REJ.*, XL, 87), that we have to read here again קיאם=analogy, for קיאם. The word *ḳiyâs* suggests itself merely because of its frequency in the controversial literature of the Ḳaraites and the Rabbanites. This fact should not mislead us to put it in place of קיאם everywhere.

15. *Kitâb al-Kashf* (כתאב אלכשף), "Book of Disclosure." A work of this name is mentioned together with two other polemical writings of Saadia (the כתאב אלרד עלי אלמתחאמל; see above, pp. 266 f., and the one discussed in the preceding paragraph, no. 14) in the list *JQR.*, XIII, 54, no. 59 (see *ibidem*, p. 327, no. 59). It is in all probability the same as quoted in a Genizah MS. recorded by Cowley, *Catalogue*, II, no. 2668, 25. Cowley suggests its identity with the *Sēfer ha-Galui* with a query. Indeed, the identification is quite improbable. A *Kitâb al-Kashf* is mentioned also in Schechter's *Saadyana*, no. xxxvii, p. 79, but it is not obvious from that passage whether it is to be attributed to Saadia or to his pupil, a certain Abraham al-Sairafî, see above, p. 293; comp. Poznański, *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur*, p. 15; *Schechter's Saadyana*, pp. 8, 20, n. 1. The work was at all events of polemical content.

16. *Kitâb al-'Iskât* (כתאב אלאסכאת), "The Book that Silences" (*sc.* the opponent), mentioned as a work of Saadia in the Genizah MS. (Cowley, *Catalogue*, II, no. 2668, 25; comp. Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana*, p. 20, n. 1) referred to above, no. 15. As the title of the treatise indicates, it was likewise of a polemical nature.

I place these last two works (15 and 16) in this section of the *Bibliography*, because nothing further is known about them. It is possible that they were separate parts of the larger works previously described.

MISCELLANEOUS

17. מכתב סעדיה גאון (Epistle of Saadia Gaon), addressed to some unnamed community. The Epistle, covering about three pages, is found in a manuscript volume which

was recently discovered by Dr. Nahum Slouschz on his travels in Morocco, in the house of a Jew by the name of Judah Perez. The volume which I had occasion to examine contains several mediæval writings, one of which bears the date 1438, but, if I remember rightly, is not written by the same hand that wrote the Epistle. The latter consists of a number of short moral exhortations, each one beginning with the words "Children of Israel!" (בני ישראל) and ending with some appropriate Biblical verse. A summary of the content with the facsimile of one page was given by B. Revel in the *Jewish Forum* (New York, 1918), pp. 74-77, the writer promising to publish the text in full elsewhere.

18. עשר שירות (Ten Songs), a short fragment dealing with songs by Biblical personages, as the Song of Moses, etc., published by Harkavy in *Israelitische Monatsschrift* (*Beilage zur "Jüdischen Presse"*), Berlin, 1890, no. 12. It was no doubt part of Saadia's Pentateuch Commentary, but perhaps existed also separately under the above title. For details see A. Epstein in the periodical ממזרח וממערב, I (1904), 85-89; Harkavy, *Oeuvres,* IX, p. lxiv; Neubauer-Cowley, *Catalogue,* no. 2745, 23; Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 66, n. 24.

VIII. SPURIOUS WORKS

It is often as important to know what an author did not write, as it is to know what he wrote. Many mediæval thinkers and dreamers, particularly the latter, had the peculiar habit of ascribing their own literary productions to some great name of ages gone by (pseudepigraphy). They were not inspired by evil motives; it was merely part of their system for the propaganda of thought. By hitching their book to the name of some famous personage they expected to secure adherents to the ideas expressed therein. Especially numerous were the pseudepigraphic writings in the field of the occult sciences and of all sorts of mysticism which did not appeal to reason and hence needed the sanction of a recognized authority. It is therefore quite natural that a man of Saadia's reputation should be credited with some such cryptic works, in order to assure their acceptance. They are here given in alphabetical order:

1. אבן הפילוסופים, "The Philosophers' Stone" quoted by Moses Botarel of Spain (about 1400) at the beginning of his *Commentary* on the *Sēfer Yeẓirah.* Moses is known to have been very liberal in the invention of authors and books; see Rapoport, *Tōledōt R. Saadia,* n. 47; Steinschneider, *CB.,* 1780-1784, 2218; comp. Dukes, *Beiträge,* p. 103; Jellinek, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala,* I, 60.

2. גורלות (ספר ה), "Book of Lots," the superstitious concoction of an anonymous author of which there are several MSS. and printed editions; see Dukes, *Beiträge,* p. 103; Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2218; *idem, Zur pseudepigraphischen Literatur . . . . des Mittelalters,* Berlin, 1862, p. 80, n. 2; *idem, Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 868, no. 1; p. 869, no. 5; Neubauer and Cowley, *Catalogue,* II, no. 2780, 2.

3. פרוש דניאל, Commentary on Daniel, printed in the Rabbinic Bible as a work of Saadia Gaon. Rapoport, *Tōledōt R. Saadia,* n. 39, has proved beyond a doubt that the Gaon is not the author thereof. Various arguments have since been advanced by L. Grünhut (in L. Rabinowitz's הגן, St. Petersburg, 1899, pp. 178-188) to disprove Rapoport's view. They were refuted by Poznański, *Ha-Goren,* II (1900), 101 ff.; see, however, Grünhut's reply in L. Rabinowitz's מאסף, I (St. Petersburg, 1902), pp. 137-154. As to the real or supposed author, whose name may also have been Saadia, see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2195, and especially Poznański, *Ha-Goren,* II, 92 ff.; Porges, *MGWJ.,* XXXIV, 63 ff.

4. פרוש ספר יצירה, "Commentary on the Book of Creation," printed in several editions of the *Sefer Yeẓirah,* first at Mantua in 1562. In discussing it, Munk (*Notice sur Saadia,* p. 15) remarks that "it is the greatest insult one could offer to Saadia to attribute to him a work which is unworthy not only of a superior mind, but of any human being capable of thinking." * For the literature of the subject see Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters,* § 260; see also Steinschneider, *Pseudo-Saadia's*

* C'est la plus grande injure qu'on ait pu faire à Saadia, que de lui attribuer un écrit aussi peu digne, je ne dirai pas d'un esprit supérieur, mais de tout homme capable de penser.

Commentar zum Buche Yezira, in *MWJ.,* 1892, pp. 79-85.

It may be added that even a recent obscurantist has made the attempt to honor Saadia with a makeshift under the title of מגיד עתידות (Future-Teller), or פתרון חלומות (Interpretation of Dreams), Lemberg, 1860 (?); see Steinschneider, *HB.,* VI, 134. For MSS. containing spurious and dubious writings, nearly all of which have been treated above, see the list of Steinschneider, *CB., 2222-2224.* For *Twelve Homilies* (י"ב דרושים) on Canticles by Saadia said to have been translated from Arabic into Hebrew by Judah Saraval (died 1617), see Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 59, top; Poznański, *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Literatur,* p. 45; above, p. 322.

IX. WORKS ERRONEOUSLY ATTRIBUTED TO SAADIA BY RECENT AUTHORS

It is not my intention to note here all the mistakes made by various authors in attributing anonymous writings to the Gaon. Thus, when a Commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics* (פרוש ספר המדות) is ascribed to Saadia by Isaac Satanow, because he confused it with the פרוש י"ג מדות discussed above, p. 159 (see Steinschneider, *HB.,* XXI, 134; *idem., Hebräische Uebersetzungen,* p. 215, n. 778), or when even scholars like Dukes (*Beiträge,* II, 38; comp. Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2198) and Harkavy (see Steinschneider, *HB.,* XXI, 96) credit him with a grammatical work under the title מלאכת הדקדוק because they misunderstood a passage in the *'Emūnōt* *, the matter needs no further discussion. The proof offered by Kaufmann (*Notes* at the end of Judah b. Barzillai's פרוש ספר יצירה, p. 335, bottom) for the existence of a commentary on Chronicles by Saadia is likewise based on an erroneous interpretation of a passage in the Commentary on Chronicles attributed to one of Saadia's pupils; see above, p. 327, under *Chronicles;* Bardowicz, *Die Abfas-*

* Ed. Slucki, p. 126, ed. Cracow, p. 165. Saadia argues there against those who claim that the Messianic promises of the prophets referred to the time of the Second Temple (see above, pp. 239 f.) and says that when he "subjected their theory to a minute examination" (והבאתיה במלאכת הדקדוק), he found it all wrong.

sungszeit der Baraita der 32 Normen, p. 86, n. 2; Poznański, *JQR.,* X, 248, n. 1.

For a number of other Bible commentaries as well as translations that were erroneously attributed to Saadia by various scholars and editors, see the *Bibliography,* above, under *Minor Prophets and Five Scrolls* (*Canticles, Ecclesiastes*). For an anonymous commentary on the Pentateuch noted by Deinard, see Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 56. Special mention, however, must be made here of the following works, partly because of their resemblance to some of Saadia's recognized writings and partly because their authenticity is here and there still maintained.

1. תפסיר אלעשר אלכלמאת, a rhetorical paraphrase of the Ten Commandments, which exists in various recensions in several MSS. and editions enumerated by Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 285, no. 87. To these are to be added the fragment no. 2861, 12*a* in Neubauer and Cowley's *Catalogue,* and another one in the collection of the British Museum. In both fragments the work is ascribed to one Eleazar b. Eleazar, who is otherwise unknown, while another MS. in the library of Paris ascribes it to the Karaite Ḳirḳisâni, a younger contemporary of Saadia; see Poznański, *ZfhB.,* X, 148; *Zur jüdisch-arab. Liter.,* p. 48. The work has been published under the name of Saadia also with a Hebrew and German translation by W. Eisenstädter (Vienna, 1868), who was deservedly criticized by Derenburg, in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift,* VI, 314, and Steinschneider, *HB.,* XIX, 50; comp. Frankel's *Monatsschrift,* 1868, p. 462. Zunz, who gave a description of the contents (*Literaturgeschichte,* p. 96), expressed doubts as to the authorship of Saadia; Steinschneider designated it as dubious in his Bodleian *Catalogue,* 2216, and later Saadia's authorship was positively denied by Derenburg, *l. c.,* and Hirschfeld, in *Semitic Studies in Memory of Dr. A. Kokut,* p. 248, n. 2. Somehow or other, later authors claimed it again for Saadia; thus Joel Müller. *Oeuvres,* IX, p. xix (corrected by Harkavy, *ib.,* p. xli) and, as late as 1913, Elbogen, *Der Jüdische Gottesdienst,* p. 321. The booklet was translated also into French with a few ex-

planatory notes by Isaac Morali (מרעלי) under the title *Dissertation homiletique sur le décalogue recitée dans les synagogues d'Algérie le premier jour de Pentecôte œuvre de R. Saadia Gaôn,* Algiers, 1913. The author used a manuscript; a comparison of the French translation with the Arabic text of Eisenstädter shows absolute identity of the contents though the text of Morali offered a few variants (see p. 12, n. 1). Morali takes no notice, and probably is unaware, of either Eisenstädter's or any of the other publications of the composition.

To the editions enumerated by Steinschneider, *AL.,* pp. 63, 285, and *JQR.,* XII, 484 (so read in *AL.,* p. 63) should be added the recensions printed in the liturgical collections ארבעה גביעים (Leghorn, 1877, pp. 74*b*-85*b*) and בכורים (Vienna, 1889); furthermore the three recensions reviewed by Bacher, *ZfhB.,* VII, 114, nos. 12-14, and the אגרת עשרת הדברות, Jerusalem, 1901 (a reprint of the edition noted by Bacher, *l. c.,* no. 14); see *ZfhB.,* VI, 104. Finally, it should be noted that while none of these recensions is attributable to Saadia, they are probably the further development and elaboration of a similar work on the Decalogue by Saadia himself, as suggested by Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte,* p. 96; for there does exist a Hebrew liturgical composition on the Decalogue, of which Saadia is unquestionably the author (see the *Bibliography,* II, p. 336, no. 3) and which proves that the Gaon cultivated this form of liturgical poetry. Moreover, in the ancient book-list published from a Genizah MS. (Schechter, *Saadyana,* p. 79) a תפסיר עשרת הדברות is mentioned, which, in all probability, is the work of Saadia, as are most of the anonymous works mentioned in that list. The compiler of the list seems to give the name of Saadia only in connection with the latter's complete commentaries on Biblical books (Isaiah, Lamentations, Job, and Esther) and to register all other works without the name of the Gaon. The commentary on the Minor Prophets mentioned there (l. 6) was fragmentary, as stated by the compiler (קטעתין), so that he may not have been sure about the author, and the same may have been the case with the כתאב אלאוהאר (l. 15),

if, as I assume, it refers to the commentary on the Pentateuch; see above, p. 316, and p. 396, no. 3; Poznański, *Schechter's Saadyana,* pp. 20-23.

One may judge of the popularity of this composition on the Ten Commandments among the Jews of the Orient from the fact that it is still being frequently published in various forms wherever Arabic speaking Jews settle in larger numbers. Thus a תרגום עשרת הדברות ללשון ערבי was recently published by a Society of Jewish Immigrants from the Orient in New York (חברת עזרת אחים) as the work of "the ancient Gaon Saadia (הגאון הקדמון סעאדיא) . . . . who has translated the whole Torah into Arabic" (New York, 1915; in Hebrew characters). It is written in rhymed prose in the latest Arabic vernacular, as it is spoken by the Jews in some parts of the Orient, and is one of the first publications of that kind in this country. For a more detailed description of a similar publication in New York see Malter, *JQR.,* N. S., vol. VII, pp. 609 f. For some further details on Arabic liturgies on the Ten Commandments see Steinschneider's *Arabische Predigten* in Kayserling's *Bibliothek jüdischer Kanzelredner,* II (1872), 1 f.

2. תקון, a rhymed composition in two parts, the one dealing with legal monetary questions (שערי דיני ממונות) and the other with laws regarding oaths (שערי שבועות). In the Responsa of Meir b. Baruk and in the de Rossi MS. of the Parma Library (codex 563, fols. 41-48) the composition is erroneously ascribed to Saadia and hence also by Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 2, and *Beiträge,* II, 12, as also by Benjacob, *Thesaurus,* p. 668, no. 869; see Steinschneider, *CB.,* 2161, no. 7, where Saadia's authorship is denied. Halberstam, who published the composition (*Jeschurun,* VI, 150 ff.), proved that its author was the Gaon Hai; see Buber, Introduction to מדרש שמואל, Cracow, 1893, p. 17, note. The work was also published, under the name of Hai Gaon, in the collection בית הבחירה, edited by S. Philipp, part II, Lemberg, 1899, pp 16-31.

3. מחברת התיגאן, a Hebrew treatise on the accentuation and pronunciation of Hebrew, a MS. of which was dis-

covered in Yemen by the traveller Jacob Saphir of Jerusalem and published by Joseph Derenbourg under the title *Manuel du lecteur,* in the *Journal Asiatique,* 1870 (also separately; see above, p. 339). According to Saphir (אבן ספיר, I, 12*b*, 55*b*) the MS. contained also an Arabic text (published by Neubauer, *Petite grammaire hébraique provenant de Yemen,* Leipzig, 1891; comp. Bacher, *REJ.,* XXIII, 238 ff.), and the whole represents a work of Saadia on Hebrew Grammar; see Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift, IV,* 202, note. Derenbourg, *l. c.,* p. 311 (separate edition, p. 3) dismisses the idea as untenable, since the author of the treatise embodied therein the "Poem on the number of letters" in the Bible (see above, pp. 154, 339), which he himself attributes to Saadia. Moreover, certain grammatical rules employed by the author were absolutely unknown in the time of Saadia, and are found first in the work of Judah Ḥayyûg. For further details on this matter see the references given by Steinschneider, *AL.,* p. 278, no. 36; p. 290, no. 110.

APPENDIX

Reprinted with changes and additional new material from *JOR., N. S.,* vol. III (1912-1913), pp. 500-509.

THE DOCUMENTS ON THE BEN MEIR CONTROVERSY

(See above, pp. 69-88; 351 ff.)

Altogether there exist at present twelve documents relating to the controversy of Babylonian authorities, particularly Saadia, on the one side and Ben Meir on the other. All these documents are more or less fragmentary. Some were patched together from separate leaves, partly doublets, found in different libraries, whither they had been brought from the Genizah, then published and republished sporadically by various scholars in several periodicals and separate editions, often with French or English translations and annotations, all within the last twenty years.

There is much uncertainty as to the chronological order or even the identity of these documents. This is due to their mutilated condition, as the beginnings and the ends, where the dates and the names of the authors are to be expected,

have suffered most or are missing altogether. Thus much, however, seems certain: all but one (no. 12, perhaps also no. 10) originated during the years 921-922 of the common era. I shall try to give a brief description of each document and to arrange them in their approximate chronological order, using in particular the texts published in H. J. Bornstein's ספר מחלקת רב סעדיה גאון ובן מאיר היובל (reprint from the in honor of N. Sokolow), Warsaw, 1904, pp. 45-102.

1. A letter of the Babylonian authorities, including Saadia, addressed to Ben Meir at the beginning of the quarrel, subsequent to Saadia's return from Aleppo to Bagdad shortly before the high Holy Days of the year 4682(=921). If it is true that Ben Meir issued his first proclamation on the Mount of Olives on Hosha'na Rabbah of that year, as is claimed by Epstein, הגרן, V, 137, we might assume that this proclamation was the cause of the letter under consideration, and that it was written as soon as the news of Ben Meir's procedure reached Babylon. However, Epstein's assumption is subject to doubt, as such a proclamation by Ben Meir is not clearly stated in the sources, and the various passages that come into consideration may also be referred to the proclamation by one of Ben Meir's sons, which took place about three months later. Moreover, to judge from the highly respectful and friendly tone in which the writers of this letter address themselves to their opponent, especially when compared with the style of their subsequent letters to him, it is hard to believe that Ben Meir had already taken his first decisive step by officially proclaiming his reforms. I am therefore of the opinion that if there was such a proclamation on Hosha'na Rabbah, as appears from the phrase הכרזת הר הזיתים (Bornstein, p. 91, bottom, 92, top), this letter was written prior to that event, after the first meeting between Saadia and the authorities upon his return to Bagdad. This finds some support in a passage of Saadia's second letter to his pupils in Egypt, where he says (Bornstein, p. 70): ושבתי אני וירדתי בגדד והייתי סבור כי קבל עד אשר באה השמועה בבגדד כי הכריזם חסרין. The wording indicates that some time elapsed between his arrival in Bagdad and the

reaching there of the news of *Ben Meir's* proclamation. The word הכריזם, which occurs twice in that letter, as well as הכרזתי (Bornstein, p. 62, l. 30; comp. p. 93, l. 15) is in favor of Epstein's view, though it is not impossible that the writers had in mind the proclamation of Ben Meir's *son*. At any rate the letter in question was written before the month of *Tebet* 4682, when the proclamation of the son took place, and is therefore the first and not, as Epstein (ib., p. 140) thinks, the third letter of the Babylonian Geonim to Ben Meir; comp. S. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 100, n. 3.

Of this letter, which is lacking at the beginning and the end, two defective leaves were first published by Schechter in the *JQR.,* XIV, 52, and in *Saadyana,* pp. 16-19, later reprinted by Bornstein, pp. 73-77. Quite recently another fragment of the same letter, consisting of one leaf, which agrees exactly with the first leaf published by Schechter and Bornstein, was discovered among the Genizah fragments of the Bodleian Library and edited by A. Guillaume in the *JQR.,* N. S., vol. V (1914-1915), pp. 546-547. In this fragment the portions missing in the publication of Schechter (about a third of the leaf on both sides) are restored to us, so that a better understanding of the contents is now possible. Why Mr. Guillaume has reprinted also the second leaf, which was edited by Schechter and Bornstein and to which he had nothing to add, is not clear to me.

2. The conclusion of a letter by the Babylonians addressed to Ben Meir, dated Tebet, 1233, of the Seleucidæan era (=4682 Jewish era). The fragment counts but 10 lines, and contains only blessings and good wishes for the Palestinians. Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 100, suggests that it might be the end of the preceding number. Whatever the case may be, this fragment, too, on account of its conciliatory tone, must be assigned to the time preceding the proclamation by the son of Ben Meir within the same month. It was first printed by Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, 213, then with variants by M. Friedlaender, *JQR.,* V, 197, by Epstein, *RÉJ.,* XLII (1901), 179, and by Bornstein, p. 45; comp. Epstein, הגרן, V, 137, n. 1. According to him it is the conclusion of the first letter of the

Geonim, which he considers lost, but, as we have seen above (no. 1), without ground.

3. The reply of Ben Meir to the first letter of the Geonim, written after the proclamation of his son, to which he refers (Bornstein, p. 51, l. 10), thus either in the latter part of Tebet or in Shebat 4682. It was published first by Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, 213-220 from a Bodleian Genizah fragment counting six leaves (copied for him by Neubauer), of which the sixth offers only one legible line, and two additional leaves which he found among the Genizah fragments in the library of St. Petersburg and which continue the text of the Bodleian fragment. Two years later M. Friedlaender re-edited the Bodleian MS. with various omissions and corrections in the *JQR.,* V (1893), 197 ff. Subsequently two more pages, partly corresponding with the text of Harkavy and partly completing it (between leaf 2 and 4), were brought to Cambridge by Schechter. One of these was published by Israel Lévi, *RÉJ.* XL (1900), 262, the other by Schechter, *JQR.,* XIV (1901), 42, and in *Saadyana* (1903), p. 15. Very recently another leaf containing part of the text published both by Lévi and Schechter, was found by Elkan N. Adler among the Genizah fragments in his possession and published by him with a French translation in the *RÉJ.,* LXVII (1914), 50. His text offers several better readings; comp. Poznański in the same volume of the *RÉJ.,* p. 290. In 1901 A. Epstein re-edited all the texts (with the exception of the portion published by Schechter) with an elaborate Introduction and copious notes in the *RÉJ.,* XLII, 180-187. He also added a French translation of nearly the whole text (*ib.,* pp. 187-191). Finally, Bornstein, using all the material collected by his predecessors, published the various fragments of the letter in his work on the controversy (1904), pp. 45-56, with partly different readings and interpretations. As there was still a gap in the text of the letter, Bornstein, an authority on the subject of the calendar, ventured to restore the missing portion (between leaf 5 and leaf 7) by conjectures; see his introductory remarks, p. 45. His conjectural text was recently borne out in all essentials by Elkan N. Adler's dis-

covery among the Genizah fragments in his collection of the missing sixth leaf, which he published in the *RÉJ.*, LXVII (1914), 51. All these finds notwithstanding, the letter, which consisted originally of twelve leaves (Poznański, *RÉJ.*, LXVII, 290), is still incomplete, a fact overlooked by Eppenstein, *Beiträge*, p. 97, who, contrary to Bornstein's explicit statement (p. 45), and although at that time the leaf now published by Adler was also unknown, asserts that the letter "is preserved in its entirety"; comp. Poznański, *l. c.*, whose distribution of the individual leaves among the various collections, however, is not clear.

4. The letter of Saadia to his pupils in Egypt, which was translated and fully discussed above, pp. 55, 82 f. There is no reference in this letter to a proclamation of either Ben Meir or his son. I have shown, however, on other grounds (see above, p. 55) that it was written either in Tebet or in Shebat of the year 4682 (beginning of 922, common era), thus coinciding in time with the letter of Ben Meir discussed in the preceding number. The exact date cannot be determined, and the letter might perhaps as well be placed before that of Ben Meir. It was first published by Schechter from a MS. belonging to Mayer Sulzberger, *JQR.*, XIV (1901), 59 (*Saadyana*, pp. 24-26), and subsequently by Bornstein, pp. 67-69.

5. Saadia's second letter, written two months after his first letter to the same pupils, as he states explicitly. It was published by Neubauer, *JQR.*, IX (1897), 37; Harkavy, הגרן, II (1900), 98; with French translation and notes by Epstein, *RÉJ.*, XLII (1901), 200-203, and finally by Bornstein, pp. 69-71.

6. Ben Meir's second letter in refutation of the view of the Babylonian authorities. From the contents of this letter it is evident that things were running against him and that he had suffered some defeats, though he was not yet ready to give in. Contrary to his expectations even some of his former friends celebrated Passover of that year (4682) in accordance with the accepted calendar (comp. the passage

in the edition of Bornstein, p. 92, l. 9: ואם עשיתם בניסן (בשגגה אל תעשו בתשרי בזדון). Probably this was the case with an overwhelming majority of the congregations. It is therefore safe to assume that the letter was written not long after Passover.

Two defective leaves (four pages) from the middle of the letter were published by Schechter, *JQR.*, XIV (1901), 56, *Saadyana,* pp. 20-22; Bornstein, pp. 90-93. The same portion of the letter was recently found on two other leaves of the Genizah, which restore to us the parts missing in the edition of Schechter and Bornstein (about the third of the content). The fragment was published by A. Guillaume in the *JQR.*, N. S., vol. V (1914-1915), pp. 552-555.

7. A fragment disputing the right of the Babylonians to fix the calendar, published by Schechter, *JQR.*, XIV (1902), 249, *Saadyana,* p. 131; Bornstein, p. 94. Bornstein suggests that this fragment formed a part of Ben Meir's second letter discussed before (no. 6). This is also the opinion of Epstein, הגרן, V (1906), 139.

8. A letter against Ben Meir by some unnamed scholar, who, as Bornstein (p. 78; comp. Epstein, הגרן, V, 141, n. 2) pointed out, was not a Babylonian. The author, addressing himself to Ben Meir, uses a phrase that occurs in Ben Meir's second letter (the passage quoted above in no. 6), turning the same against him and his followers, thus making it certain that he wrote during the same summer, probably soon after the appearance of Ben Meir's epistle. It consists of three leaves, which were found and published at different times, the third leaf by Israel Lévi, *RÉJ.*, XLI (1900), 229-232, re-edited by Epstein, *RÉJ.*, XLII (1901), 197-200; the second by Schechter, *JQR.*, XIV (1901), 62-63 (reprinted in *Saadyana,* pp. 26-28); and the first by the same author in *Saadyana* (1903), p. 19. The three parts, all badly mutilated and lacking about half of the original contents, were then arranged in their consecutive order and re-edited with explanatory notes by Bornstein (1904), pp. 78-89. Lastly, here again another complete leaf corresponding to the first leaf edited in *Saadyana,* p. 19 was

recently found among the Genizah fragments of the Bodleian Library and published by A. Guillaume in the *JQR.*, N. S., vol. V (1914-1915), pp. 550-551. This is a welcome find, as the leaf contains more than double the contents of the mutilated leaf previously published.

9. A fragment dealing with the differences between the "Four Gates" of the accepted calendar and those introduced by Ben Meir. There is not the least doubt that Saadia is the author of this fragment, as various phrases and even a whole portion of it agree almost literally with passages occurring in the remnants of the ספר המעדים; comp. the phrase in Bornstein, p. 64, l. 18 and p. 102, l. 3, as also the passages following there on pp. 65 and 102, respectively. The question is only as to the chronological place of this fragment within the controversial literature. Bornstein, p. 99, suggests that it may have been part of the ספר המעדים or an appendix thereto. Epstein, however, in הגרן, V, 140, though recognizing the authorship of Saadia, is of the opinion that it represents a letter of the Babylonian authorities to the Jewish communities. If that be the case we should have to assume that Saadia was charged even with the composition of the official letters of the Geonim, which is not very probable. Besides, the words (p. 102): לכתוב את הספר הזה להיותו לזכרון בתוך כל ישראל להודיעם מעשה בן מאיר הזה מתחלה ועד סוף, do not seem to refer to a letter, but, like the parallel passage (p. 65), to some memorial volume that was intended for the Jewry in general. To such a ספר זכרון ומגלה לדרות Saadia refers also in an Arabic letter published by Hirschfeld, *JQR.*, XVI (1904), 296, *fol. 2 verso,* ll. 4-5, and it is therefore probable that we have here a fragment of that memorial volume. This is suggested also by Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 102, n. 3, but he overlooks the authorship of Saadia. There is only this difficulty, that in the letter referred to Saadia speaks of the book as having been written by the Exilarch, while, as pointed out before, the fragment indicates Saadia as the author. We may assume, however, in this instance, that Saadia wrote the book by request of the Exilarch and in his name, so as to give it more weight

and authority, and, therefore, in referring to it had to designate it as the work of the Exilarch. After all, it was not a question who was the writer of a document, but what purpose it was intended to serve. The description Saadia gives there of the ספר זכרון, as dealing with the *Four Gates* contrived by Ben Meir, tallies very well with the contents of our fragment. I am therefore of the opinion, that the ספר זכרון mentioned by Saadia in one of the fragments of the ספר המעדים (Bornstein, p. 65) is not another name for the ספר המעדים itself, as has been hitherto accepted (Epstein, הגרן V, 140, Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* p. 101), but is the name of another book, of which our fragment formed a part. Moreover, it was not the ספר המעדים, which was to be read in public on the twentieth of Elūl, as generally assumed, but the ספר זכרון mentioned therein. There is no basis for the assumption that the *Sēfer Zikkārōn* is identical with the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim,* or that the latter was intended for public recitation. Judging from the style of the extant fragments of the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim* it would, indeed, seem very strange, that such a book should have been destined to be read in public, as it could hardly serve the purpose. The passages on which this view is based were simply misunderstood, because of the erroneous identification of the two books. It should be noticed that in the fragment of the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim* (Bornstein, p. 65) Saadia reports that it was decided to write a *Sēfer Zikkārōn* for future generations (נכתוב ספר זכרון לדורותינו אחרינו), which agrees with ספר זכרון ומגלה לדורות in the letter published by Hirschfeld, while in the fragment of the *Sēfer Zikkārōn* (Bornstein, p. 102) he says that it was decided to write *this* book as a *memorial* for all Israel (לכתוב את הספר הזה להיותו לזכרון בתוך כל ישראל). This distinction between the two books relieves us also of the difficulty that Saadia should have repeated his report in nearly the same words in one and the same book. The *Sēfer Zikkārōn* was written, first, at the request of the Exilarch, when all other efforts against Ben Meir had failed, and was finished before Elul, 4682; while the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim,* which mentions the former,

may have been written at any subsequent time, but probably soon afterwards. As Saadia informs us in his ספר הגלוי (see Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, 151, l. 22; comp. *JQR.,* N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 496, l. 6) he wrote the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim* also by request of the Exilarch.

The fragment of the *Sēfer Zikkārōn* was published by Schechter, *JQR.,* XIV (1902), 498-500 (*Saadyana,* pp. 128-130), and by Bornstein, pp. 99-102.

It is rather surprising that Mr. Elkan N. Adler from whose unique Genizah MS. this fragment was first published by Schechter should have overlooked my discussion of the matter (*JQR.,* N. S., vol. III (1912-1913), p. 505-507) as well as the repeated editions of the fragment, and should have re-edited it in the *RÉJ.,* LXVII (1914), 44 ff., as a "new document" representing part of the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim!* The new thing is the clear French translation which he contributed; comp. Poznański in the same volume of the *RÉJ.,* p. 290.

10. Three fragments of Saadia's ספר המעדים, written probably when the struggle, so far as we know it, was over, 4682-4683; see above, no. 9. One of the fragments (counted by Bornstein, p. 58, as no. II) was published with a French translation by Elkan N. Adler and I. Broyde, *RÉJ.,* XLI (1900), 224-229, later retranslated and re-edited with additional notes by A. Epstein, *RÉJ.,* XLII, 191-197. Subsequently the fragment was completed by two leaves discovered by Schechter, which partly overlap one another as well as the text previously published. The two additional leaves were published by Schechter, *JQR.,* XIV, 49-52 (reprinted in *Saadyana,* pp. 10-13).

Fragment no. I was published by Schechter, *JQR.,* XIV, 47-48 (*Saadyana,* pp. 8-9), and fragment no. III by Schechter, *ib.,* p. 52 (*Saadyana,* pp. 13-14). The whole was later re-edited by Bornstein, pp. 58-67. For another fragment of the *Sēfer ha-Mō'adim,* in which, however, the controversy is not explicitly mentioned, see Harkavy, *Zikrōn,* V, 220; comp. Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVI, 291, n. 1. A more recently

discovered fragment is described in Cowley's *Catalogue,* II, no. 2660, 27.

11. An Arabic letter of Saadia to three Rabbis in Egypt in answer to their inquiries regarding the calculations of Ben Meir, which they had accepted by mistake, celebrating the festivals accordingly. Saadia enlightened them on the situation and admonished them to read for themselves and to others the Letter of Reproof and Warning (כתאב תוכחה ואזהרה) of the Head of the Academy, copies of which he sent, together with copies of the *Sēfer Zikkārōn* of the Exilarch (see above, no. 9). This interesting letter is dated "Friday, the 11th of Tebet." The year is not given, but no doubt it is 4683. The letter was published with an English translation by Hirschfeld, *JQR.,* XVI (1904), 290-297; comp. D. Yellin's *Notes* thereon, *ib.* pp. 772-775.

12. A list of the differences between the respective calculations of Saadia and Ben Meir regarding the appointment of the festivals during the years 4682-4684. According to Epstein (הגרון, V, 141) the author of this list lived in Egypt after the death of Saadia, for he adds the eulogy זכרונו לברכה to Saadia's name. He also speaks of Saadia as "the Gaon" and "the Head of the Academy," which, as we know, he became only several years after the quarrel. The list was published first by Schechter, *JQR.,* XIV, 59 (*Saadyana,* pp. 22-23), later re-edited with a French translation by Epstein, *RÉJ.,* XLIV (1902), 235 f., and finally by Bornstein, p. 95.

In addition to the twelve documents here discussed there may be mentioned a fragment which was recently published by A. Guillaume (*JQR.,* N. S., vol. V (1914-1915), p. 556), and which seems likewise to bear on the Ben Meir controversy. The allusions are so veiled, however, that nothing definite can be said about the contents. My assumption (see Guillaume, *l. c.,* p. 545) that the fragment is part of Saadia's first letter to Ben Meir which he wrote in Aleppo (see above, pp. 82 f.) is not borne out by the passage (p. 557, l. 6): ושמא בשוב התלמיד הזה ישוב גם הראש, in which Ben Meir, if he is meant by "the Head," figures as the third person.

An epigram bearing the name of Ben Meir and supposed by Elkan N. Adler, who published it in the *RÉJ.*, LXVII, 52, to be intended against Saadia, is in all probability, as shown by Poznański (*RÉJ.*, LXVII, 291), to be ascribed to another Ben Meir, of a later period.

Of general articles on the controversy I wish to point out in particular that of Poznanski, *Ben Meir and the Origin of the Jewish Calendar, JQR.*, X, 152-160, as well as the elaborate essays of Epstein (*REJ.*, XLII, 173-210, XLIV, 230-236, הגרן, V, 118-142; comp. Poznański, *ZfhB.*, X, 67) and Bornstein, referred to repeatedly above.

The account here given of the chronological order and identity of the documents on the Ben Meir controversy differs essentially in several points from that of the various authors mentioned, but a careful examination of the sources will, I believe, justify this presentation.

POSTSCRIPT

While the present work was going through the press some new Genizah material, bearing on Saadia, has been brought to light by Dr. J. Mann, who has courteously sent me the galley proofs of his article, which is to appear in the April issue, 1921, of the *JQR*. It was too late to take full account of that material in all the passages upon which it has a direct, and often an important, bearing, without resorting to some radical and extensive changes in our construction of Saadia's biography. I have therefore thought it advisable to treat the matter separately in the present *Postscript*.

The point that concerns us most is a new date for Saadia's birth which is to be inferred from one of the recovered fragments. The fragment in question contains the initial portion of a Fihrist (list) of Saadia's writings compiled by two of his sons (She'ërit and Dosa) eleven years after their father's death, at the request of some person or persons whose names are obliterated. The list was preceded by a few biographical data of which the following is all that remains (the letters in brackets are supplied conjecturally): פחות משׁשׁים שׁנים מ . . [יו]ם מהן י״ד שׁנה ב[י]שׁי[בת] מחסיה חסירות ד׳ ימ[י]ם ו[נפ]טר בליל שׁני בסוף האשׁמורת התיכונה בששׁה ועשׂרים בחדשׁ אייר שׁלשׁנת [א]לף ורנ״ג היום לאסיפתו מי״א שׁנה [פ]חות—"Sixty years less forty . . . . days of which he (Saadia) was fourteen years less four days in the academy of Sura. He died in the second night (*i. e.*, in the night from Sunday to Monday) at the end of the middle watch (about two o'clock) on the 26th of Iyyar of the year 1253 (of the Seleucidæan era = May 18, 942). It is now nearly eleven years since his departure."

Judging from the exactness with which the date of Saadia's death is here given, it seems quite certain that the missing part at the beginning of this biographical sketch contained a

similarly exact information about the date of Saadia's birth and that the words "sixty years less forty . . . . days" refer to some preceding verb indicating the total length of the Gaon's life. Taking then the 18th of May, 942 as the day of Saadia's death, we obtain the result that he was born between the 30th of March and the 8th of April, 882 (the exact day cannot be ascertained, as the units after "forty" are missing).

The date 892, heretofore generally maintained, was based exclusively on the testimony of Abraham Ibn Daûd, who stated explicitly (see Neubauer, MJC., I, 66) that Saadia died in 942 at the age of *about* fifty years (כבן חמשים, or, as other MSS. have it, כבן נ'; see below). Ibn Daûd's statement is repeated in the works of all the following mediæval chroniclers without exception. When, with the appearance of Schechter's *Saadyana* (1903), the old mistaken idea of Saadia's direct importation from Egypt in 928 to assume the Gaonate of Sura, was corrected by a letter from the Genizah from which we learned that as early as 921 Saadia had been sojourning in the East for at least six and a half years (see above, p. 55), it was concluded that the year 915 was that of his emigration from Egypt. For, taking Ibn Daûd's date as a basis, Saadia was then 23 years old, and it appeared quite improbable that even prior to this age he should have left in Egypt, as is obvious from the letter in question, not only a wife and several children, but also a number of pupils, whom he now considered mature and influential enough to ask them for their support in his struggle against Ben Meir. These conclusions tallied also with the general assumption that the "Refutation of Anan," written, as is well attested (see the references above, p. 380), at the age of 23, was composed by Saadia in his native country; which may also account for his having emigrated soon after (see pp. 58 f.), that is, in accordance with the chronology of Ibn Daûd, in 915!

Still more significant corroboration of these conclusions was seen in a fragmentary diary, which was undoubtedly written by Saadia and in which the latter was found travel-

ing in Babylonia and Syria at the age of "twenty . . . ." years (here again the units are obliterated). Circumstantial evidence made it appear very probable that these journeys took place in 920-921, shortly before the outbreak of the Ben Meir controversy (see above, note 107), and this again was possible only on the basis of the old date, 892, given by Ibn Daûd, as according to the date 882 of the recent Genizah fragment Saadia must then have been 38-39 years old. It should be added that the word עשרים (twenty) in the diary is vocalized and accentuated, removing all doubt as to its correctness (see above, p. 60).

If, then, the new date of 882 for Saadia's birth-year be accepted as correct, most of the calculations concerning the time of Saadia's departure from Egypt and his subsequent travels in the East, as presented in the biographical portion of this book, would have to be given up or essentially modified. We are thus placed before the alternative of rejecting either the reading "fifty" (Ibn Daûd) or that of "sixty" (recent Genizah fragment) as faulty. Ibn Daûd's text is borne out by all the MSS. and editions of his work as well as by those of the works of numerous later chroniclers, who drew upon him. Hence a mistake in his text, if such it is, would in all probability have to be traced back to the author himself, who may have been misinformed. In the case of the fragment, on the other hand, the mistake could only have originated with some copyist (who had before him נ' מ (פחות) which he read as מ', this reading being then given in full, משׁשׁים, by another copyist), as it is inconceivable that Saadia's own sons, the authors of the list, should have been mistaken about the age of their father at the time of his death.

Now, on general grounds, it might readily be admitted that the mistake is Ibn Daûd's, who, as proved elsewhere, was not always well informed (see above, note 86).* But then we would ultimately be compelled to assume that even the earlier source or sources relied upon by Ibn Daûd were like-

* Dr. Mann's suggestion that נ' in Ibn Daûd's text is a copyist's mistake for ם' does not recommend itself for the reason stated above that the reading is found in all extant manuscripts.

wise all incorrect or their authors misinformed with regard to exactly one full decade of Saadia's life. Such an assumption, merely because a conflicting date is found in an otherwise badly mutilated Genizah fragment, seems to me extremely hazardous. Genizah fragments are, after all, not Masoretic texts, and, on the other hand, Saadia appeared to the ancient writers, like Ibn Daûd and his predecessors, important enough to make them treat his life with some care and attention. Moreover, the expression כבן חמשים (*about* fifty) used by Ibn Daûd, viewed in the light of the information we receive from the recent fragment, namely, that Saadia lived "sixty years minus forty . . . . days," suggests the idea that the vagueness of Ibn Daûd was not due to his uncertainty as to the exact number of years, but that he too was aware of the fact that the decades, which he took to have been five, were lacking some days, the number of which he either did not know or did not care to state.* If this be the case, it would seem rather strange that while being correctly informed with regard to a small fraction of a year, he should have been misinformed as regards a whole decade of the total of Saadia's life.

Finally, it should also be taken into consideration that, while, as will be seen below, all the details contained in the fragment can be borne out by other sources, nothing whatever can be found to support the new date of the year 882 as that of Saadia's birth,** except perhaps the general reflec-

* Sherira, the chief historian of the Gaonate, who as Gaon and contemporary of Saadia, certainly was familiar with the details relating to the latter, likewise gives only the fourteen years of Saadia's occupancy of the Gaonate, but omits the missing days mentioned in the fragment.

** A passage in the אור זרוע (I, 197, col. 1, no. 698) of Moses b. Isaac of Vienna (1250): ורב סעדיה גאון פרש בשם ר' היי גאון, referring either to Hai b. Nahshon of Sura (died 896) or Hai b. David of Pumbedita (died 898), cannot be construed to prove a personal contact between the latter and Saadia, as in that case we should have to assume that Saadia studied at the academy of Sura or Pumbedita prior to 896 or 898; for which assumption, even granting that he was born in 882, there is as little reason as for its alternative, that either of the two Hais ever was in Egypt.

tion that, having accomplished so much literary work he must have lived more than fifty years, which is hardly safe ground to build upon.

In view of the foregoing considerations it seems inadvisable to undertake a reconstruction of Saadia's biography on the basis of the new date. It may be suggested, however, that leaving Ibn Daûd aside, a harmonization of this date with the older Genizah material might, on the whole, be possible by placing Saadia's emigration from Egypt in the years 905-911, that is, when according to the new date, Saadia was 23-29 years old. He may at first have spent some time in Palestine, where he met Abû Kathîr and other Palestinian scholars (see pp. 36, 65 f.), and then proceeded to the seats of the Gaonate, subsequently continuing his travels through Babylonian and Syrian cities. The diary (above, pp. 59-62), written during this period, would, contrary to our previous conclusions (see note 107), stand in no relation whatever to the letters of Saadia to his pupils in Egypt, written in 922 (see pp. 55 f.), that is, eleven or more years later. During the intervening years he must have lived again for some time in the Holy Land, for in one of the letters referred to, written somewhere in Babylonia, in which he complains to his pupils in Egypt of not having heard from them for six and a half years, he writes "you have probably thought that I am *still* in Palestine" (see p. 56).

While it would thus be possible to bring the various Genizah documents into harmony with the new date derived from the recent fragment, we have no explanation for the strange fact that Saadia should have lived for a period of seventeen years (905-922) in separation from his family—unless we assume that subsequent to his travels in Babylonia and Syria, as described in the diary, he returned to his native country; whence, for some unknown reason, he again emigrated to Palestine in the year 915. All this is quite problematical. Only new finds in the unexplored Genizah collections may eventually clear up this part of Saadia's biography. For the present, therefore, I deem it more desirable to leave the presentation of Saadia's life unchanged,

making allowance, however, for a possible need of readjustment in the future. In the meantime I have inserted a reference to this *Postscript* wherever the results based on the older material came in conflict with the data of the latest Genizah fragment.

The new material, including the fragment in question, contains also a number of details which partly modify and partly supplement or corroborate various statements made in the course of our investigation. They may here briefly be set forth as follows:

1. Saadia's election to the Gaonate took place on the 22 of Iyyar = 15 of May, 928.

2. Saadia did not write a commentary on the whole Pentateuch, but only on Genesis from the beginning to the section ויצא (28, 10), and on all of Exodus and Leviticus. Samuel b. Hophni continued the work by commenting upon Genesis from ויצא to the end, all of Numbers, and Deuteronomy from the beginning to the section שופטים (16, 18);* while the rest of Deuteronomy was done by Saadia's famous adversary Aaron Sarjâdah (see above, note 241). It is interesting to note that of all the fragments of the Pentateuch commentary enumerated in our *Bibliography* (pp. 311-315) only the one under letter *q* may now have to be assigned to Samuel b. Hophni.

3. Dosa actually became Gaon of Sura (see above, note 281), but not until 1013, when he was over eighty years old. He died in 1017, four years after his succession to the Gaonate, at the age of about 87-89 years. This fully substantiates our suggestions above, notes 13-14, 290.

4. Samuel b. Hophni did not die in 1034, as, following Abraham Ibn Daûd, has heretofore been maintained, but in 1013, when he was succeeded by Dosa. He was thus not the last Gaon of Sura, as hitherto generally assumed. Samuel's own son, Israel (see above, p. 29, note 13), succeeded Dosa in 1017. He died in 1033, which may have been the cause of Abraham Ibn Daûd's mistake in giving the year 1034 as that

* The part of Samuel's Commentary on Genesis published by I. Israelsohn, St. Petersburg, 1886 (see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 110, no. 15), belongs to this work.

of the death of Samuel b. Hophni, through confusion of the father with the son. Israel was succeeded in the Sura Gaonate by one Azariah, perhaps —— Israel's son, who died shortly after, and was succeeded by Isaac, the last Gaon of Sura. Israel survived Hai by some years. The Sura Gaonate accordingly lasted, contrary to previous assumptions, longer than that of Pumbedita. The new material, it may be added in passing, fully bears out my conclusion that owing to Dosa's claims to the Sura Gaonate, there must have been much strife and contention between Sura and Pumbedita prior to the appointment of Samuel b. Hophni (see above, note 281).

5. Dosa had an older brother by the name of Sheërit (comp. above, pp. 29, 56). So far as I know this name does not occur elsewhere in Jewish literature. The title *'allūf* (see above, p. 64) is added to his name in the list of his father's writings which he together with Dosa composed in 953. He must have been dead when Dosa became Gaon.

As to the works enumerated in the list, they will all be found in the present book under their proper headings. Some titles occurring only in the list remain obscure and require further investigation. Thus it is not clear what is meant by מסאיל מן תרי עשר ומן אלתוריה (comp. above, p. 318) or by כתאב אלגמע(?) אבטאל . . . (comp. above, p. 400, below). The אזהאר אלריאץ, *i. e.*, anthology, is probably the Arabic title of the Poem on the 613 Precepts (see p. 330, no. 2). For this Poem on the 613 Precepts (see p. 330, no. 2). For this title see Steinschneider, *AL.*, p. 151. The כתאב וגוב אלצלאה is not a new work, as thought by Dr. Mann, but the title of the introduction to the *Siddūr,* which circulated also as a separate work; comp. Neubauer, *Ben Chananja,* VI, 552; Bacher, *REJ.*, XXXIX, 206, no. 7: above p. 330. The אקאמה אלעבור, the כתאב גמע אלחגה ללסרוג, and כתאב גמע אלשראיע are probably identical with the works mentioned above, pp. 352, no. 5; 399 f., nos. 12, 13. The Commentary on the *Sefer Yezirah* is here called תפסיר הלכות יצירה. For the דראשאת see p. 323; for אחרי מות and ואלה המשפטים see p. 396, nos. 2, 3. These sections of the commentary were in circulation as separate books and hence the special titles.

It is therefore unnecessary to assume with Dr. Mann that they were the titles of the entire second halves of Exodus and Leviticus, respectively. Indeed, it is quite improbable, as in that case there was no reason to mention them as separate books immediately after having mentioned the commentaries to Exodus and Leviticus in their entirety.

PHILADELPHIA, January, 1921.

ADDENDA

Note 175: Comp. also Poznański in A. Schwarz's *Festschrift,* Berlin, 1917, p. 473.

Note 191: To the biographical sketches on Saadia should be added that of A. Schwarz, *Jüdisches Literaturblatt,* XXII (1893), pp. 17 ff.

Note 240: The name Sarjadah is probably not of Arabic origin, but is to be derived from the Syriac סרגד, to draw straight lines on paper or parchment, hence סורגדא, a wooden or metal ruler. The name may therefore have to be pronounced Sûrgada; comp. Krauss in Schwarz's *Festschrift,* p. 575.

Note 645: For Dûnâsh b. Labrat's relation to Saadia see Porges in Kaufmann's *Gedenkbuch,* pp. 245-259.

Pages 320, below (Eliezer b. Nathan), and 323 (Homilies): See Michael, *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft,* VI (1906), 32.

Pages 345, no. 3, and 348, nos. 7-8: See Michael, *ibidem,* p. 31.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A. Initials

AIE. = Abraham Ibn Ezra.
AL. = Steinschneider, *Arabische Literatur,* Frankfurt a. M., 1902.
CB. = Steinschneider, *Catalogus librorum hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana.*
HB. = Steinschneider, *Hebraeische Bibliographie,* Berlin, 1858-1882.
JE. = *Jewish Encyclopedia.*
JQR. = *Jewish Quarterly Review,* London, 1889-1908.
JQR. N.S. = *Jewish Quarterly Review, New Series,* Philadelphia, 1910-1921.
KLO. = Poznański, *The Karaite Literary Opponents of Saadiah Gaon* (see p. 380).
MGWJ. = *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums,* Breslau, 1851-1921.
MJC. = Neubauer, *Medieval Jewish Chronicles,* Oxford, 1887-1895.
MWJ. = *Magazin für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums,* Berlin, 1874-1893.
REJ. = *Revue des Etudes Juives,* Paris, 1880-1921.
ZfaW. = *Die Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft,* Giessen, 1881-1921.
ZfhB. = *Zeitschrift für hebräische Bibliographie,* Frankfurt a. M., 1896-1921.

בכורי העתים = בכה"ע (see note 190).
דור דור ודורשיו = דד"ו (see note 32).
פרוש ספר יצירה = פס"י.
סדר תנאים ואמוראים = סתו"א.

B. Abbreviated Titles

Bacher, *Anfänge,* see note 22.
Bornstein, see note 4.
Dukes, *Beiträge,* see p. 328.
Eppenstein, *Beiträge,* see note 6.
Harkavy, *Zikron,* see note 3, beginning.
Jellinek, *Beiträge,* see note 405.
Lazarus, see note 194.
Nathan, see note 192.
Pinsker, *Likkūtē,* see note 3, near end.
Sherira, see note 192.

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